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FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 1.

THE LADDER.

BY

REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

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THE LADDER.

BY REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

DO you remember the story of Jacob's ladder? A young man, the first night away from his home, lying asleep in the desert, only the stars for his companions, he dreams a dream, — "And behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven."

You and I live on the earth, but we want to get to heaven; and the way to do it seems to me prefigured in this dream of the patriarch. It is something above us we are to reach. Not only is the way to it narrow, but upward. What was merely a dream to the young man in the desert, at his start in life, should be the grave thought of every young man and woman at their start.

I do not mean to say that every thing in a Christian life depends upon the kind of start you make; for I know some men who have made a very bad start, and have afterward recovered from it. But a wrong start complicates matters, and needlessly mul-

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tiplies dangers. It is a great thing to recognize the necessity of a right start; to feel that you cannot afford to make a failure; to find where that right start is to be made, and then to follow it up in the right way.

Now, what you want to do is to reach heaven, to obtain God's favor, to secure your own peace. To do this, you need to lead a religious life. How are you to do that?

By not only beginning, but beginning *at the beginning*. There are a great many persons who want to have all religion promises, who think they have "got religion," who never do this at all; who never clear away thoroughly the old rubbish in their lives, plant the ladder securely, and begin with the first round to climb along the slow and tedious and upward way. They get something which is called a "conviction;" they feel that something must be done; and so, without pause or self-scrutiny or accurate purpose, begin upon themselves a series of spasmodic experiments, — a little this, that, and the other, — very desultory, very aimless, very worthless. No long time ensues before they are thrown back in their way, discouraged, give it all up. It is no use for them to try. Either there is no such thing as religion, or it is too high, they cannot attain unto it. Where is the difficulty? Not in religion, that is a sure thing; not in human nature, not in the individual nature. Religion was made for these, is just what these need, is man's great help to God.

The difficulty is, that no proper beginning, *at the beginning*, has been made. You have seen boys at play spring up and catch at some round in a ladder above their heads, and swing there for a little, and then, from inability to go higher or remain where they were, drop off, back to just the place from which they started; while one who began at the foot and went up the right way, regularly, step by step, — though he was behind in the outset, though he must go creeping at a pace the other despised, — yet quietly and safely and easily has reached the top. It is so with the religion of many. It consists in a series of violent leaps to reach that which is above them, for which they have made no manner of preparation. They cannot hold where they are. They have nothing on which to stand. They must fall after a little, and be just where they were, with exhausted energies, depressed spirits, and a corresponding unwillingness to renew the trial.

It is astonishing how many really earnest persons omit this matter of beginning, and how slow they are to see its necessity, or to recognize in the neglect the cause of failure, when the very first question they would ask a mechanic whom they saw halting and bungling in his work would be if he knew any thing about first principles, if he had ever begun his trade. Thorough, systematic training in the elements, down among the roots, is the secret of success in every calling; and, without it, failure. Beginnings secure

endings. The religious life is no exception. It is amenable to universal law.

There may be various causes exciting one to a better life. They will be different in different persons. It may be fear of the consequence of sin; it may be love to God; it may be admiration of Christ; it may be one, it may be several things combined. They are not the beginning. They give the point at which to place the ladder: they are not the ladder. They give the place from which to start: they do not give the spirit in which to start. I think that, as the first act of the awaking Jacob was to consecrate the spot at which this revealing had come to him, so our first work should be to consecrate ourselves, so that our hearts may become Beth-el, the house of God. This is *beginning at the beginning;* a conscious, hearty, unreserved surrender of the self, and the setting it apart to the service of God.

Sure of the first round, and the foot firmly planted on it, the active work begins. Self-consecration is the inward act; but the beginning is not established until this is supplemented by actual endeavor. You must not merely find, and put your foot on, the first round, but make it the support of the next step. You cannot stay there. You cannot step back. You must go forward, — *do something* to prove the life of your inward act. The way is narrow, and it is up. It is *climbing* along a heavenly way the Christian must go, — a way which has no short cuts, a way

Christ the Lord was forced to go, the only truly royal way. The step must be taken cautiously. Have you not seen a laborer, with his burden upon his back, pause, ere he started on his tedious way, rightly to poise his load; then, with firm grasp, holding to one round after another, as he slowly drew himself up, every now and then pausing to be sure of his position and his hold, never perilling life and limb by rash haste, by overstepping the regular, appointed bound? Just such wise caution needs the Christian laborer, — to be sure of his first step, and then to be willing to go on from that slowly, regularly, to other, higher places; not reaching after the top at the outset, but by regular advance trusting in the end to reach that bright place whose effulgence, shed from the open above upon every ascending round, is the guide and cheering of the way.

Just what the next step shall be will depend upon individual condition, temperament, want; and must be decided by each one's special knowledge of himself. Religion is not a cast or mould into whose fixed angles and proportions you must run your spirit; but religion is a spirit plastic and pliant, now finishing a Paul, and now a John, according to native endowment. Paul was made a Christian one way, and John another; each wholly unlike the other, but each Christian. The same process could not fit both. So with us all: the special steps and the special sequence must be our individual selection,

according to individual need. And this demands some knowledge of one's self, too often the last thing one has any knowledge of.

Our poet Longfellow has written a striking poem upon the idea of St. Augustine, that we may frame a ladder for our heavenly ascent out of the evil deeds we have repented of. Do you remember it? If not, get it and read it. The thought is valuable just here. The start of many is encumbered and delayed by the memory of shortcomings and sins, which, though heartily repented of, cast a threatening shadow from behind upon the work before. Now, a repented sin may sometimes be the best help we can have, give us the next lift. Our very follies and sins, truly repented of, wisely used become means of spiritual progress, rounds in the ladder of heavenly ascent. Every one must feel, that his past, outgrown, repented sins are not mere curses, clogs, but that they give a certain ease, a certain capacity of rising; that upon their ruins he has made his first sure step toward heaven. It is not worth while to sin in order to secure that aid, for there is another excellent way; but, having sinned, that aid comes, an angel of cheering, born out of the darkness.

Life is not merely a narrow, but it is an upward way. It is climbing a ladder whose foot is on earth, whose top pierces the sky. From that opening above streams a divine light; and out of it comes the voice of God, speaking to our slumbering ear; rousing us to the great truth, that, however desolate,

however hard our lot, however dark the night, however cheerless and solitary the way, surely God is with us. Let us awake, arise, consecrate ourselves, and go on our way; putting beneath us the vanities and the meannesses, the weaknesses and sins of the past, piling one upon another those remnants of a sinful life, — slowly, step by step, round by round, lifting ourselves out of all unworthiness, "*standing on what too long we bore*," — till, rising on past wrecks, we shall have reached the point from which we may begin to climb along the ascent of actual virtues. The way is clear, then. It is long, it is weary, it is narrow, it is steep; but it is the only way. No man need miss it. It is like the patriarch's ladder set up on the earth in darkness; but its top reaches to heaven, and there is light!

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill,
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will, —

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern — unseen before —
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

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FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 2.

THE PARLEY.

BY

REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

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THE PARLEY.

BY REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

NEHEMIAH was the cupbearer of the king Artaxerxes. He was a Jew, a captive and an exile. He had a high place in the regard of the king, as well as a high place of trust; for the office which he held brought him near the person of the king, at the same time that it was a token of royal confidence and regard. Yet these could not make him forget his country. The patriot blood flowed full and strong in his veins. He relates that, being in the palace Shushan on a certain day, he had fallen in with "certain men of Judah," who, in answer to his inquiries of the condition and prospects of those of his countrymen who had returned from their captivity, inform him of the many embarrassments and insults to which they were subjected by their neighbors. "The remnant that are left of the captivity," they say, "are in great affliction and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with

fire. And it came to pass," he continues, "when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." The burden of his prayer was an acknowledgment of that sinfulness of the nation which had brought these calamities upon them, and a petition that his intercession with the king in their behalf might be favorably received.

Four months passed, and Nehemiah presented himself to the king at a feast with the wine-cup. The king noticed a sadness about him which he had never observed before, and, knowing that he was not sick, questions him as to its meaning. Then was the cupbearer sore afraid; for it was a high crime to appear sad before the king. Summoning his courage, however, he answers, "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" The king kindly inquires what he would wish in reference to it. Encouraged by the manner of the king, and fortified by prayer, he asks leave of absence for a series of years, with power to build again the walls of Jerusalem, and establish her. The monarch readily grants his request, affording him every facility for his journey, furnishing him a sufficient escort, and bestowing upon him the office of governor of the city.

Having arrived at the city, and inspected, secretly and by night, its actual condition and immediate need, he divides the work to be done among different

parties of the citizens. They were also assisted by the citizens of other cities, by men of all rank, and even by women.

The success of Nehemiah appears to have excited the jealousy of some of the neighboring princes, who had undoubtedly heretofore profited by the defenceless position of the returned Jews. In various ways they sought to intimidate and embarrass him in his work; but their secret counsels were brought to nought by his vigilance and faith. The work steadily progressed, although, as he says, "they who builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." In every way he encouraged his countrymen, both when the enemy threatened, and when the usurers of their own nation oppressed them. In all things he showed himself a man of wonderful resource and energy, and, above all, of confiding piety, venturing upon nothing without first asking guidance of God.

Foiled in every other way, when, at last, the walls are completed, except the setting-up of the doors at the gates, Sanballat and Geshem propose a conference in one of the villages of the plain, intending to do him mischief. Four times they sent to him; and four times he returns them for answer, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" A fifth time they send,

and yet again a false prophet hired by Sanballat and Tobiah: but to no purpose. And in fifty-two days the wall was completed, to the sore confusion and dismay of "the heathen that were about us; for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

So, as Nehemiah upon the wall of Jerusalem in the presence of his enemies, is the soul of man in the presence of its foes.

It is a great work that the soul has to do; and its attitude should be that of the prophet, I cannot come down: no, I cannot stop long enough to talk with you; for I am a soul, something on which the Almighty has breathed his inspiration. There is no so grand a thing as I: pyramids, mountains, seas, empires, systems, time, all sink into insignificance beside me and my immortality: I cannot come down. I have a work to do, — a soul to save, to keep unsullied, to make strong; a life to carry out to its fullest fruition; duty to man, duty to God; duty to time, duty to eternity, — I cannot come down. Here, where God has placed me, I stand. Here what God has given me I do. I can have no parley. I understand your embassage. I know you all, — what you are, what you want, what you would do. I tell you, I *cannot come down.*

Ah, what a splendid attitude that, would a man only take it, and stick to it, and say it out as boldly the last time as he did the first! Where then would be the power of temptation? How then could any

evil overcome? Do not you see that the whole thing is in his hands? Evil can't get at him so long as he refuses to come down. It cannot scale the wall on which he works, any more than devils can scale the throne on which God sits. It is to the stoop of the soul that sin comes. Let it be upright, keep fast by its integrity, and there is never danger, never harm. The world may be filled with threatenings and temptings, fascinations and lures. They may use every wile, the seducings they know so well to wield, which they have found so often do their work. There is no harm in them, no danger, nothing to fear, so long as we shall make this answer, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." We must live and work with that rabble always about us, with specious message and cunning wile tempting us from our point of vantage down where they are, and where we would be without weapon to build with, or weapon of defence. Let our last answer to their importunacy ring out as clear, as full, as decided, as confident, as brave, as the first did, and we are safe. But, alas! there is the danger. The soul wearies before the importunacy of sin. It doesn't speak up as determinedly as it did at first. The enemies in the plain are quick to detect the wavering, to ply it more and more, till, as the silly crow of the fable, it yields the coveted prize, and another is added to the long list of the conquests sin has been able to make through the soul's infidelity. Just think how many there are, every day and

everywhere, who are yielding to these importunacies, and getting a terrible overthrow; who began by saying, "I am doing a great work, I cannot come down," who were perfectly safe so long as they said so, but who ended by deserting the work and coming down, and putting themselves into the hands of enemies who know neither mercy nor quarter.

That will not do. That is not honorable. That is not right. A child of God may not so desert the post of duty at which God has placed him. It is a matter of the last moment that he learn the power of saying *no*, — that he compel that power into a habit, — that temptations may learn that they have no other answer to expect from him. We read in the Gospel account of the Saviour's temptation, that, after the Devil had plied Jesus with the three temptations, he left him. Why? Because he felt that he was a thoroughly whipped devil. He had met with a new experience: not a sharp rebuff, which he felt pretty sure he could turn into a pliant yielding; not a *no* whose dying accent shaded off into a *yes*, and which his wit taught him would next time be a *yes* without a shade, — but a *no* that meant *no*, that had a ring to it he was not used to and did not like, a *no* that grew firmer and firmer every time; and he knew there was no use in holding on. He had nothing to hope there. It was a great work Christ was doing, and he would not come down. There is nothing the Devil fears like a deliberate *no* deliberately stuck to. It is that we have got to

learn to say under every temptation, little as big. It will not do merely to say to crime and vice and bad habit, "I am doing a great work, I cannot come down." That is the thing to say to very much lesser things, — to the whole host of things that any way tarnish the purity of the spirit, or take the life out of its one upward way. It ought to be the ready reply to the thousand things we do not think much about, but which are marring our every-day characters; little things in themselves, no doubt, and yet in their aggregate as thoroughly destroying the quick delicacy of the soul as the accumulated particles of dust destroy the reflecting power of the most polished mirror. Suppose that to the little temptations of every day, — to appetite, selfishness, temper, sarcasm, scandal, love of applause, untruthfulness, discourtesy, servility to custom and fashion, — to each, to all, one was to say, "I am doing a great work, I cannot come down:" you are little and insignificant, but still I can't come down, — how much mortification we should be saved, how much useless regret, how much bitter self-reproach! how much would our friends and companions be spared! how much truer and nobler would our lives be. Well, that is the one thing to do, little as in each instance it may seem, and useless. It is the one thing which will keep us in the security God has placed us in. So long as Nehemiah was on the wall, and refused to listen to the messages of the kings in the plain, it made no odds what was their number, or what was their pur-

pose, or what was their attempt. There he was, secure, master of the situation. And just so is every soul in man *master*, so long as resolutely, only, and always his answer is, "I am doing a great work, I cannot come down."

I know that at times we all feel the grandeur of this work, and that nothing can tempt us away from it. It solemnly presses upon us what a solemn thing it is to live. But the cares of the world, the perplexities of life, the deceitfulness of riches, the race for the many prizes of time, make us forget it again. It ought not to be forgotten. The soul has a solemn and sacred trust committed to it, — a great work to do; and it has nothing to do with the importunate things that would seek to draw it from its work. It has no part with these base things ever plotting against it; and when they insist upon being heard, when they declare they have something to propose for its good, when they coax and cajole, when passions insist and pleasures invite and appetites beg and feelings entreat, when the whole brood and rabble tumultuously assault, let the soul be firm, relying upon God, and saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Let it keep on, busy about its own, busy ever. With one hand let it hold the implements of its labor as it builds; in the other let there be instruments of war, that it may repel. Let it listen never so much as for a moment to what these would say. It is this listening *once* that is so fatal, — this doing a *thing only*

this time, which deceives and then destroys. It is this feeling, that *this time no harm can come*, which gradually builds up habit stronger than life; which has made so many of us recreant to our privileges, and taken us so far from heaven. The soul in man must never once descend to this dalliance. Apart, alone, above, secure, it must look upon all unholy things; and its look must say, "Stand back! I am holier than ye. I am doing a great work; I cannot leave it; I cannot neglect it; I cannot delay; I cannot come down to you; I cannot be of you. Leave me, fallen and foul as ye are, that I may finish the work given me." And so, as Nehemiah triumphed in the end over the maze of obstacle and trial about him, built his city, secured its peace, and returned in honor to the confidence and love of his master, shall the steadfast soul, rebuffing all assault, refusing every parley, keeping steadily and always at its work, do it well and wholly, and, returning in honor to its Master, find his reward and benediction.

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FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 3.

THE STRONG MAN.

BY

REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON.

THE STRONG MAN.

BY REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

IF there be a fact of revelation and experience, it is the fact of the strength of the man, the capacity in him, and the possibility.

Isn't it quite time that we recognized this, that we threw off the thrall a false theology has cast about us, which holds many of us yet who think ourselves rid of it; that we ceased to talk about, to mourn over, to excuse ourselves because of human weakness, and asserted and put on our strength, our God-given, our heaven-born, our heaven-reaching strength? Long enough the race, the truth, have halted beneath the palsying influence of an old Church dogma, false to reason, false to fact, false to God. It is quite time theology were dethroned, and truth reigned; and that Christianity, quitting the wail which has taken its dirge-note from man's fall, should put itself in unison with the inspiration of a truth as old as any revelation, without which there is for man no hope, no dignity, no heaven, no power

of making that coveted approach to God which cheers him in toil and trouble, and is the glad reward to which he looks in the beyond.

The whole ordering of law and gospel, the whole discipline of providence and life, presupposes power. They are not adapted, are not addressed, to the weak, puny, emasculate. They are for the strong; not merely those *to be* strong by and by, but those who carry elements of strength with them, who have *got* it, and only need to *train*, not *wait* for it. Had it not been for the fiction of human helplessness, so consonant with human timidity, which has crept into the world's faith, and usurped the place belonging to a nobler truth, we should have seen a far different condition of the Christian Church and the individual man. Tell a man he is weak, as the Church has, and does not our common experience assure us that he will take the general word for it? The child that is called dunce and fool, first suspects, and then believes, and then comes to be that; the man kept down by the cry of inability becomes unable. You make the boy or man what you assert; they cannot outgrow, or get above that: it cripples and dwarfs them; and so our whole moral nature has come to be crippled and dwarfed by the cry of the Church against it, till we believe in a lost condition, a lapsed state, a depraved nature, and fold our hands over the fact, and cry, "God help us!" like witless cowards, imbecile and distraught. I verily believe a large part of the actual sin and all of the

despair in the world is to be traced to the effect this belief has upon man. It is the millstone about his neck that drowns him in a sea over which he might with steady stroke and a bold heart pass triumphantly. I cannot think of a thing more abject than a soul thoroughly believing the imperative word of synod and catechism, set to face life as it is, with the sternness of its demand and the terror of its discipline, wilting beneath these, as the child of the tropics beneath the rough assault of arctic cold. What courage, what inspiration, has it? It can only complain of fate, palliate its short-coming, cringe in the presence of evil, and shirk the command of duty. What can such know of the higher qualities of life, — the life which glows with the consciousness of power possessed; which only sees Divine commands, duties, and burdens; which only knows that it is to be obedient, and, with instant, reverent, persistent faith, puts itself to the assigned task, conscious that it can win wherever God orders? What knowledge have such of the calm joy, the great peace of those brave souls who accept life's greatest duties, its heaviest burdens, advancing daily from strength to strength, from grace to glory?

It is my creed that God made man *a* power. That does not give me pride: rather it subdues me with the solemnity of the sense of responsibility pressing the more upon me. I have no faith in native weakness, which I may make the scapegoat of my sins. God did not do less for man than for

nature, — for the beasts, the elements. He made him *a* power. You and I are that; the nature common to all is that. I analyze myself, and I find I am that. All the elements of my being are powers; and above them all, ever restless, ever aspiring, ever coming out brighter and surer, is the conviction of something within me created to be, capable of being the master of every position, circumstance, and condition. I stand to myself a very Colossus, compact with vital energy, conscious of lordship. I may not tell you the how or why about it; I may not satisfy a cool logic, a determined dogma, a wilful disbelief, — but that is what I get when I plunge into my deepest consciousness, and try to know what I am. I utterly and unqualifiedly discard the idea that I am born morally weak. I believe there is a truth in man's being made in the image of the Almighty; and, when I farther read the demand to follow the Master, I believe there is the strength to respond to it; not strength to come from without or from above, a fresh, inspiring energy, but a native, resident strength. And if you ask me why, with all this conviction, I am not the strong man, I shall say that my own infidelity to my native dower, my neglect to train myself, repair my waste by living close with God, suffice to account for it. My strength is a waning power because not recruited freshly from the one Source. I falter and stumble in life, I show myself weak, I prove myself recreant, I wander away from my promise and my hope, because *I will*

not be strong; because I listen, then yield to, and then become enthralled by, things over which God made me master. I stoop to my own slaves; and my bondage is the more bitter, degrading, hopeless. This may not suit theology, or put me in accord with the sects. Personally, it would be convenient, to say the least, could I throw the blame of the weakness I have allowed to grow upon me upon some other thing. It would be a relief, positively a comfort, could I honestly throw my sins, follies, back upon native inability. Something tells me I cannot do it, that it is not true. God made man strong, *a power*, and expects him not merely to retain but increase his strength, till his power shall be recognized as second only to that of God.

But the whole tendency of things is against us. One shows himself a man only by contending against and overcoming all manner of obstacle. The things of life are not helps, but hindrances. Faith, as the sects define it, is a hindrance; for it begins with crippling him with the assurance of the weakness, the degeneracy, of his nature. And then the whole tone and routine of life, of which he is inevitably part, tend to belittle, to let him down from his true position. A man has often a single-handed fight to maintain himself, and often he makes the best manhood of it. Let one really believe in his own native power; have large, yet humble, confidence in himself, — not self-sufficient, but self-reliant; let him set his mark high, and the very obstacles the world

casts about him, its false theories and lying, will fall before him, and, as they fall, give new power and courage. Emerson says, "Make of the calamities friends;" and he who shall make allies out of his obstacles will win his way to a glorious result. The fortunate things, as they are termed, do not assist the native strength. That requires rigor. You admire the beauty of the delicate shrub that blossoms and is fragrant in the artificial heat of the greenhouse; but you go to the oak for strength, — the oak, which, from the first tiny sprout of the acorn until now, has led a life of stern contention with the elements. I see the man in men showing itself as they emerge from conflicts, trials, disappointments, disciplines, reverses; things that reveal them to themselves, and make them comprehend the vast, the slumbering, reliable power that lies within. Manhood is not a thing of inches or of pounds or of years; it is not in the brain or in the muscle. The virtues make the man: no position, no self-sufficiency, no accident, but the moral powers which have been drawn out of his nature and well cultured by the things he has come in contact with.

When I hear men talk about our poor human nature, and, with a painful sort of maudlin, ask, What can you expect of it? I feel like saying that we should expect every thing of it. I will say nothing about the life of Jesus; but you must wipe out that heroic life of Paul, — that life of sturdy duty and gentle love, you must efface all record of

that noble manliness, if you are to talk about poor, weak human nature, the best, and the worst abused, of God's gifts. Why, it was the same nature that gloried in the cross of Christ, that had once been glutted with persecuting those who loved it. The Damascus vision, the Arabian seclusion, did not take away one and give another nature. It was the iden tical Paul still: only he had sounded his own being, — found, brought into use, his powers; to these he added a great faith, and the two made him invincible.

And I do not overlook that, his great necessity. If I believe in the innate power of the soul, still more I believe in the eternal power of God, — the two co-operating energies, just as much needed to develop and perfect man, as the sunlight is needed to develop and perfect the innate power of the seed.

It is a puny thing he makes himself who brings to a rare perfection excellent gifts, and prides himself upon work well done, when he has left out that higher faith, the corner-stone of all work. I am not speaking of making one's self a saint; I am not referring to another life; I am speaking of making men for this world, — men who shall be in the world, yet kept from its evil. David's charge to Solomon was to "show himself a man" by keeping the statutes of the Lord. You feel, as you read his career, that, so long as he did that, he was a man; but what a poor and contemptible thing he became when he

assumed the pomp, and stooped to the excess, of a luxurious and licentious satrap, rivalling in pomp and in guilt the license of Belshazzar! His kingly title and power go for nothing. The monarch is empty of the man.

To the true strength and manliness of our characters, to the acting-up to the high demand of our position, two things are wanted: first, A change in faith as regards the native condition of the human soul. It is quite time that the Church took to preaching Christianity, not this or that say-so of some man, sect, catechism, or council, but the say-so of the Lord Jesus. The poor cant about our depraved nature has no scriptural warrant, and insults the God who asks such great things of every soul of man, and has taken such great care that it should be thoroughly fitted for them. Jesus and Paul perpetually appeal to the strength in man. They treat the soul as we the bodies of children: by care, education, training, drawing out, and confirming the native powers; not bolstering up weaknesses, giving crutches to feeble limbs, and helps to faltering tongues, but recognizing the power of limb and tongue to do something for themselves, after some little culture. We do not build nurseries and hospitals, but we have playgrounds and schools; we do not hedge about and cosset weakness, — we call out and discipline strength. Had God sent Christ to a thing as weak as men declare the soul, it would have been with a very different message, with other

awards, and a far less glorious example. Christ and his mission alone ought to explode all theory of native inability. They should teach us faith in our native power. — And then, as the complement of that, the essential to a rightly working unit, we should get faith in God, — the childlike spirit of trust in doubt and trouble, of confidence in duty and in danger.

There is a want of real manhood to-day. We see it and we feel it, and the world suffers. It has not been thought essential to, rather to militate against, the health of the Church. But the Church can only have health as it feels the strength of the individual members of it. It must be recruited from the mass; and it grows weaker daily, unless it shall find the strong and manly to stand by it, and raise it up to the standard of the early days. Sadly, too, society lacks men. Trade and charity, literature, art, science, all lack men of the true stamp; and so neither is what it might be, what it will be when there shall be infused into all the breath of a better life; when all this denial of self-ability shall have passed, and man shall know and hold in just poise his powers, looking up to God as his guide, following in the way which He points, doing as He decrees, and bearing as He wills.

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BY

REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

BOSTON.

AN UNUSED POWER.

BY REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

PAUL is a grand example for man; and better, perhaps, a great encouragement. No one can have more to contend against than he had, and never did more splendid victory crown human effort. He was a man of an incarnate energy, compact with all vitality, who knew no such feeling as fear, and no such word as fail.

It was *purpose*, very much, that made Paul, — a man under any circumstances *to do*, but all the more likely to do wrong except for the deliberate will to do right; a man perhaps to do, rather than to resist. Our great difficulty is that we are purpose*less*. Paul stood up in the face of every opposition, not ignorant, not presumptive, and declared, "I will not be brought under the power of any." We stand before the same things. Imperious and importunate, they daunt us. To the demand, "Resist and overcome," the dastard wail of our spirits is "I *can't;*" more truly, perhaps, the deliberate, recreant

response is "I *won't*." Either too weak or too unwilling to resolve, human souls, immortal souls, suffer themselves to be led bound into most abject captivity, when so nigh them, at cost of so little effort, is the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

It is a somewhat curious fact, that man is the only creature who does not know and use his own powers. He has more unused power than power in use; and his unused powers are not infrequently his most valuable powers. At the head of these I am tempted to put his power of resistance; for surely of no power is he more ignorant, none does he so little use. To judge by the kind of talk you hear, from the lives you see, one might suppose that man is a dry leaf, to be borne upon winds and waters hopelessly by their will. You would suppose there was a fate set dead against the human will; that God had put man at the mercy of any circumstance, the little as the great. It is not so; and he who thinks so, or acts so, insults God. Never did He ask of any man that which He did not endow him with the ability to perform. Never did He expect him to conquer, except as He has given him the ability to conquer. He asks difficult things, never impossible things.

There is in things material a power resident, seemingly for the preservation of their integrity, called *vis inertiæ*, — the power or spirit of sloth or immobility, which only the impinging of some superior force can overcome, which must first be overcome

before you can do any thing with them. This power has not been omitted in the moral constitution of man. Among the elements of our make is a native, rugged principle of immobility, — a kind of moral *vis inertiæ;* not a force, an activity, not capable of aggression any way, not one of the higher qualities, but one lying below, which has got first to be overcome before we can come into any danger. It is the first safeguard with which God has furnished and would support our humanity, — the safeguard of ignorance, of the savage and the child. Man was not made volatile as a dead leaf, to be whirled every way: but among the very lowest rudiments of his being is set a power of passive resistance; not a *will*, the active, aggressive principle, but a *won't*, a thing in its place of first moment, which is usually to temptation very much what making one's self a dead weight is physically to an opponent. It takes a most decidedly superior and obstinate force to overcome it.

This cannot be considered a *working* quality. I state its existence as a fact, to show how God has regard to the needs of man in the whole process of his creation; how, in all stages of his development, he has desired to fortify him against the dominion of evil, and has woven into the fibres of his being the power to resist.

Beside this, we detect in our nature active elements of resistance, — sentiments, principles, impulses, the instinct which not merely impels us toward the good, but to abhor, repel the evil. There

is an instinctive shrinking from wrong in the savage and the child, — an untutored abhorrence of what is low and mean, a setting against these, surviving the degradation of centuries or the bad influences of example and education, — which sufficiently show what was the native sensitiveness with which God in the outset furnished man. Beside and behind all teaching, we are conscious of a restraining influence native to us, acting within us; and we constantly look back to and fall back upon this native ability, while we see in the men who do not accept the Christian religion, who are not under any theory or philosophy, the restraining influence of nature, not very active or very wise or very exact, — still the power which keeps, and which they rely upon to keep them up to their own standard of decency or duty. The apostle recognized the fact, that some men were a law unto themselves, and did by nature what the law of Christ commanded. By it they were restrained from doing wrong, resisted what they deemed wrong; and to-day there is the same restraining, resisting power in you, in me, in the sceptic, the savage, and the child.

But the power of resistance is not a thing of nature alone. It is much that it should be that, because it shows that we can, of and by ourselves, resist evil; it shows that the inexperienced, the ignorant, are, by the grace of God, not left destitute, helpless, but furnished with means adequate to their position and their want. When culture and life

create demand for other aid, the same grace of God gives it. To this native power, God grants allies; not to act *for* man, separately, independently, but *with* him, as his guardians and guides. I do not know that I can catalogue these allies; for it would embrace the whole host of influences from God and Christ, from eternity and time, from experience and man, which marshal themselves, and camp about, and stand ready to defend the imperilled soul; not to act for it, but to act with it; not to do the work, but to help in doing it, — to suggest, direct, not perform.

Now these combined make up that power of resistance with which God would furnish the soul for its warfare in life. Man has been called a bundle of habits. Might he not as justly be called a bundle of resistances? Native and acquired, he is furnished with capacities to resist. Why is he not invincible? Why is history, why are our own lives, full of mortifying failures? Why are there more dirges of defeat than pæans of victory?

The answer that I give is, that this power of resistance is an unused power. We have it ready, waiting, ample; but we do not call upon it. We go into our work in the world, — the various scenes of duty and discipline, the places where temptations meet us, the places in which many times already they have mastered us: but we go again and again, just as we have again and again gone, — thoughtless, self-reliant, ourselves tempting temptation; and the

result is the often-repeated story of disaster, defeat, and consequent discouragement. We have gone into life as an army would, which should go into an engagement without a cannon or a bayonet, a bullet or a sword. We have discarded every means of repelling attack. We have placed ourselves in the front post of danger, where we are assaulted front, flank, and rear; and we have not even the means for covering our retreat, but, unarmed and exposed, we stand at the mercy of a merciless foe. We violate all law, and then marvel at our ill success, deny that we are equal to our task, and upbraid God because he has put us here to be the prey of powers remorseless as they are active.

Paul's was a better wisdom and a braver way. If any man ever knew any thing about temptation, it was he. It had been his life-companion, his life-opponent. Born as he was, cultured as he was, with his talent and his temperament, in his social position and his position before the world, he was singularly exposed to temptation. Not more surely did chains, scourgings, prisons, await him, than did temptations everywhere. And yet he did not yield. He made them all feel, when they tried their power on him, that they were in the presence of their master. He made them cower and run. For the second time, Satan found that he had an adversary on whom he might exhaust himself, while fresh, vigilant, invincible, calm, and equal to the strife, stood the chief apostle. It is related in the mythologies, that, in a

strife between two of the superior powers, he who was the weaker was wont, when his strength failed, to touch his mother earth, getting from that brief contact strength wherewith to renew and prolong the contest. So Paul renewed his vigor by contact with the allied spirit from God; so Jesus renewed his by turning toward the ministering angels; so we may ours, till, Satan's craft and Satan's might baffled and subdued, he shall be as effectually put behind us as he was behind them.

And this resistance of Paul was a very simple thing. It was a *power in use*. He knew it, and had trained it; understood its nature, what were its allies, and how to work with them. Summoning them, when he found the horizon darkening with coming trouble, he resolved that he would not be brought under the power of any thing. Here, in Corinth, friends and companions had departed from the purity he had inculcated. There, in Thessalonica, others had grown cold in faith, and turned to idols. At Ephesus and Galatia they had mistaken him. Peter himself had fallen; but Paul stood, as some grand tree that stands upon the battle-plain unscathed while all around are the wreck and havoc and horror of war, — stood because that one declaration of his, "I will not be brought under the power of any," was as the key-note to all his life. He had no knee to bow. He had no foe to quail before. He felt his inborn power. He knew the blessed assistant influences He might have to suffer. He might

be scorned. He might lose all. He might stand alone, as in a midnight terrible with woes. What matter? His choice was made, his resolve taken; his purpose — you might as well shake the eternal centre. So he conquered; and the shafts of persecution, the lures of flesh, of earth, beat against him harmlessly, recoiled, and fell, as the shell of the foe, that strikes against the wall of proof, recoils and bursts harmlessly in the plain below.

Suppose we were to take the same resolve, and keep it in the same spirit! Would there not soon be an end to the *power* of evil? And what had Paul to help him that we have not? Only faith, courage, persistence; no unattainable qualities, no rare gifts of God, but things by culture within your reach and my reach. Shall we not have them? Does it pay to be so cowardly as we are, so debased, so powerless? Does it pay to yield so easily at the first threat, so gladly at the shallowest lure? What have we ever gained? Esau, by bartering his birthright, gained his life; but so much as a mess of sodden pottage did no man of us ever get who yielded his soul to the wile or the will of temptation, only misery and shame. Misery and shame! they are not the things to which God made us to be heirs, but glory, honor, and immortality rather; and they shall be the portion of every one, who, like Paul, can say, "I will not come under the power of any thing."

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THE GLEANING.

BY

REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

BOSTON.

THE GLEANING.

BY REV. JOHN F. W. WARE.

WHEN Ruth came back from her first day's work in the fields of Boaz, her mother's question was, "*Where hast thou gleaned to-day?*" That is just the inquiry our souls ought to put us when we come back from our daily work. It is that which every soul needs every day to know.

One of the first requisites to a complete character is the habit of self-questioning. The man who has an uncertain, devious way before him, takes not a step without anxiously asking if it shall lead him on. This devious way of life cannot with less caution be trod. Every step needs thorough investigation: thoughts, motives, feelings, words, acts, desires, must be examined, tested. The first wanderings need to be checked, the first mistakes corrected, that the soul may be, from point to point in its progress, exactly acquainted with its condition; not left in that fatal darkness and ignorance which some are, who only wake at last to their true condi

tion when the evil is triumphant, and misery and despair have become their portion.

There is not a wiser or a better thing to be done by any of us than to have the habit of a regular night-review of all that the day has been, — a general summing-up of the gleaning of the day. Before we sleep, the thoughts and purposes and deeds of the day should be called up, and submitted to a candid and severe questioning; and every secret, skulking desire or feeling, dragged out from its hiding-place and judged. With very little practice, the record of a day may be surely and rapidly made out; and, if the work be entered into heartily, nothing will escape. A few minutes after the work of the day is over, as you lay your head upon the pillow, at that solemn moment when you resign yourself to the solemn keeping of the night, are all that is required. Rapidly the day passes in review, unerringly we may approve or condemn; and, shaping our prayer for pardon and making our new resolve out of the day's history, we may sink to sleep, knowing how it stands between us and our God, and ready for the specific and definite duties of to-morrow. Each succeeding day so may have a particular work marked out for it from the day that has gone. Each succeeding day may be an onward step, and, —

> "Ascending and secure,
> To-morrow take its place."

For this, no time so good, no time so sure, as the

night. Let the soul rise up to examine and to pray. Let its language be, —

> "The day is drawing to its close,
> And what good deeds since first it rose
> Have I presented, Lord, to thee,
> As offering of my ministry?
> What wrong repressed, what right maintained,
> What struggle passed, what victory gained,
> What good attempted and attained?
> Feeble at best is my endeavor.
> I see, but cannot reach, the height
> That lies for ever in the light;
> And yet, for ever and for ever,
> When seeming just within my grasp,
> I feel my feeble hands unclasp,
> And sink discouraged into night."

Many a day's questioning must result thus, the darkness of many a night appear darker yet under the discouragement of such a review. And yet the work must not be given over. This very discouragement proves how much the work needs to be done, — is in itself the strongest reason why we should press on, looking to God, and saying, —

> "For thine own purpose thou hast sent
> The strife and the discouragement."

I remember to have seen in the window of a New-York print-shop, two colored lithographs every way ordinary, and yet conveying forcibly a lesson one may well never forget. In the one, it is early morning, and a young girl in a neat attic chamber, just ready to go out to her daily labor, is upon her knees, and lifts a fair, innocent, hopeful face to her

Maker, and her words are "*God! I give thee my heart.*" In the other, it is evening, and the same humble room, and the same fair girl, and the attitude the same; but now an inexpressible sorrow is graven deep on the downcast look, and the smothered cry is "*God forgive me!*" Between the two, a day's history, — the sowing and the gleaning, the hope and the fulfilment, the morning and the evening. Finds it no response in our own experience, in the history of our own yesterdays, in what shall be to-night the history of to-day?

We are always gleaning. To-day it is this field; to-morrow, the next: this hour is absorbed in one way, the next in another. The places where, the modes in which, we work, are determined very much by outside things, matters independent of ourselves; but the manner in which we work, what we glean, depend upon ourselves alone.

How is it with us when the day ends? What is the soul's answer? "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?"

I have gleaned among bad passions and feelings. Things have not gone with me as I wished them to go Men have not done as I wished them to do. I have been fretful and harsh. I have judged unkindly. I have spoken bitterly. I have felt angrily. It has been a clouded day, and sometimes it has stormed, so fiercely have these wrong feelings rioted within me. I have not been happy. Conscience has upbraided me. Others have been wrong,

and wronged me; but what had that to do with me? I have no right to excuse myself so. Alas that I should have gleaned in a field so full of evil, and should have gleaned so much!

To-day I have gleaned among bad thoughts Before I left my bed, I remember, they began Through the day they have pursued me, — no: I have pursued *them!* I have hungered for them. I have sought them out. I have followed them up. I would not leave them. Where have they not led me? What unholy and forbidden things have I been familiar with! How completely have they drawn me away from the holy memory of God, which ought to have dwelt within me, sanctifying the little things of the day, and filling my heart with gratitude for his blessings! But I did not think at the time how very bad it was, how very mean in me. The field looked fair and tempting. Much lay scattered about ready for my hand. I entered, and I gleaned, and the day waned; and when I come to think where I have gleaned, and what is my harvest, I feel how faithless I have been.

Again I have been gleaning, and it has been among foolish prejudices. Foolish I call them now, because I can look back upon them at the hour of questioning, and see *how* foolish they were. Very bitter have they been, and strong. I have thought them honorable. I have clung closely to them, and they have given harshness to my feelings, unkindness to my actions, venom to my tongue. Instead

of that true candor, that charitable judgment, which, as God's child and Christ's disciple, I should have manifested, I have allowed my own narrow and selfish feelings to stand in the way, seeing through them men and their deeds. And some of these prejudices have been the veriest whims in the world. I cannot tell whence they have come. I ought to despise them, and yet I have been their slave. I ought to expel them, and yet I have hugged them closely, have made them friends, have followed them into all manner of wrong. What have I gleaned to-day? Shame and degradation, the remorse of my soul, the displeasure of my God.

I have been gleaning in another field to-day, and there have been many with me. I have been very selfish, and I am sure I have seen a great deal of selfishness. How true is it that man is the only selfish animal! How much have I to-day thought of, and acted for self! My own comfort, my own way, my own plans, my own advancement, — how much time and thought these have had, and how have I fretted and worried when any little thing stood between me and them. It was very easy to be selfish, it was very pleasant then; but, now that I look at what I have gleaned, how shrunk and blackened it looks! The fair, ripe fruit is blasted to the eye, and bitter to the taste. I see I have gleaned the tares. Their flaunting beauty deceived me. I will gather them together and burn them to-night, and then I will pray God for wisdom to know

the wheat henceforth, and gather that only into my sheaf.

Answers such as these must many a conscience make to the nightly question, and many as bad as these, which I cannot enumerate. Some must answer, I have gleaned among sordid gains, worldly cares; I have sacrificed truth for gold, honesty for gain. Others, I have gleaned among debasing pleasures, low scenes, sensual delights. Yet others must confess, that, while the sun has shone upon them and all was glad, the field bright and full of ripe enjoyment, they have gleaned murmurs and discontents and repinings; they have been unhappy and morose; have brought home from their task little that they can approve, or God will accept: while others must own that they have stood all the day idle, and have not gleaned any thing.

But it is not so with all. Joyous as Ruth bore to her mother her full lap, so many to God the rich store of gleaning they have made, — a store beyond what their own unaided labor could have attained. On nightly pillows there are smiles of peace, there are looks of love, there are prayers of faith, tokens of serene hearts and improving lives. The penitent answers, I have gleaned to-day amid strifes. I have *tried*. I have stood in the midst of temptation and found myself strong. I have thought of my God, and *tried* to serve him. And the recording angel smiles, as he writes in the book, "Well done! faith

ful in little." — The Christian answers, To-day I have gleaned in the way trodden by Jesus. I have remembered my God and my duty. I have forborne and forgiven, — been patient and resigned, cheerful and meek. I have thought of the cross, and borne it, and have found rest to my soul. Not that I have done all, attained to the prize: but my soul tells me that to-day I have labored well; and surely this peace I may take as the sign of success. — The sick and the sorrowing say, To-day we have gleaned from a rich field. The Master has caused handfuls to be left for us among the sheaves. We have a harvest of mercy. We have had patience to bear, submission to bow, hope to look forward, faith to sustain; and out from our hearts, sweeter than music out from the harp, has risen the solemn strain, "*Thy will be done!*"

Yes, from many a heart goes up the answer of peace. Rich are the gleanings in many lives, oftentimes where least you expect it. The poor in spirit, the meek, the lowly, the forgotten of the world, the humble dwellers, acting in narrow and unnoticed circles, the eye of God sees them every day scattered over the large field, which is the world, bending to their tasks, entering into whatever demand is made them, every night gathering in a sheaf the disjointed deeds, and binding them with a prayer. Surely, when the life is over, and the angels come, and the "Harvest Home" is sung, these humble

laborers will not be overlooked; but from east and west and north and south shall they come rejoicing, bearing now in full sheaves that which they have culled by many gleanings. Then shall there be joy in heaven.

Shall we not enter upon this great work of self-search thoroughly, systematically? Shall we not make it our last nightly duty to answer, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" There is need enough that we should. Strangers here, as Ruth in the harvest of Boaz, He who owns this world has not shortened his hand. It is no stinted gleaning they may have who are true. There is much, not only for us to get, but much also that is thrown in our way for our encouragement, and to show us the benignity of Him who owns the field wherein we labor. He is our next of kin. What the law demanded of Boaz, love will gain for us, — a home and protection for ever.

It is said in the poem from which I have already quoted, —

> "There are two angels that attend unseen
> Each one of us, and in great books record
> Our good and evil deeds. He who writes down
> The good ones, after every action closes
> His volume, and ascends with it to God.
> The other keeps his dreadful day-book open
> Till sunset, that we may repent; which doing,
> The record of the action fades away,
> And leaves a line of white across the page."

Let us so rightly search our lives, that, if there be any evil in the day gone, before the angel closes his book we may repent, and the fair, white page of holy deeds and genuine repentances be our only record!

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THE COST.

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON.

THE COST.

BY REV. J. F. W. WARE.

A GREAT multitude were following the Saviour one day, when he suddenly turned to them, and abruptly stated the cost at which any one must be his disciple, advising them first to count that cost well. It was a pretty fearful catalogue of penalties he enumerated to them, not at all like the privileges and glories they had anticipated, — not honor, but obloquy; not power, but persecution; not home, but exile; not life, but death; not a crown, but a cross; and what the cross was to the Jewish idea, what of horror, degradation, agony it prefigured, we cannot, in these days, fully understand. It was a cost many there could not consent to, and many since have found it too much for them. There is no use in trying to deny it, or cover it up, — to be a disciple of Christ costs most of that which men first and most prize, and without such surrender we cry "Lord, Lord," in vain. Only by that way do we come into the kingdom of heaven.

There is a great deal of complaint, secret and open, that the conditions of the kingdom are so hard, that the way is so strait. It is a reason men give why they are not followers of Christ, that it is too difficult a thing, — a reason no true man ever gives in any thing else. There is no amount of hardship, of sacrifice of all that is most loved, that a man will not accept in order to attain some temporal, earthly desire, — to get money or power or reputation. Sacrifice is the law of attainment in every thing. If we are to have a thing, we know that it will cost. We accept the conditions; we do not delay or hesitate; we set at the work. It is the great secret of character and of the success of life, that for what is of real value we pay a price, and, for the most part, we work cheerfully as successfully under this knowledge, for the most part, cheerfulness insures success.

Now there is a kind of grudging spirit among men, that hates to give up any thing to God; and it goes with them into their religious life. They want to have religion, to be counted on the right side; but they do not want to give up much for it, — a little here and there, a few things they can manage to do without, matters of no great cost. That is the amount of it with the great mass of professing Christians, upon that plan too much have Church systems gone. The history of religion, from its earliest corruption, viewed in one light, would seem to be an attempt to convince men that all the diffi-

culties of the Christian life are to be escaped, the obligation to such a life cancelled, by a system of church rites and church joinings, by a nominal adherence and an intellectual faith. Take the Christian world, both Catholic and Protestant, and by far the larger portion believe in this cheap religion; that they can satisfy God, save their souls, reach heaven by this way, which shall cost them nothing. A few prayers and telling of beads, a certain sum spent in confessions and masses, church joining and baptism, an accurate answer to the demands of a sect, a subscription to a creed, church zeal, — cheap things all, when the end is considered, — these are the means, this the sum, the price, at which all that Christ purchased at so great a cost is to be attained. Nay, more than this, is not the popular scheme of redemption through the vicarious suffering of Christ part and parcel of the same thing, — man hoping to escape the penalty of his own sin through the merits of Jesus, the sinner to go scot-free, the sufferer of penalty the sinless? Is not this a strange perversion of old Scripture as of new? Is it not in each, as in letters of light, the soul that sins, *it* shall pay the penalty? Is it not a cheap get-off to thrust it upon Christ? He lived to show that religion is a difficult thing. Men since have labored to show that it is easy.

No one who has any just idea of God's character, who has become at all imbued with the principles of the gospel, can be satisfied with these cheaper offer

ings. He will feel that One who has so cared for him can only be met by the most costly return on his part. The church-going of the sabbath, the repetition of the creed, the submission to the form and formula of the churches, the acceptance of ordinances, emotions that pass as the morning dew, all the easily acquired and easily lost signs which satisfy the world, will fail to satisfy him. He understands that there are grave responsibilities, solemn duties in life; that there is much to be done, much to be borne, much to be surrendered; that this way in which an immortal spirit journeys toward its immortality is a way of trial, discipline, difficulty, requiring constant care, effort, prayer; that it demands of the spirit what it does not easily, willingly, give up; that there is antagonism between the human and the divine will. Into no one condition of the Christian life can he enter except at a cost. He pays a price for all that he attains, and he rejoices in it. The more difficult the requirement, the more time, anxiety, struggle, it has cost, with a more solemn feeling of satisfaction the at-last-triumphant spirit lays it at the Father's feet, and in that consecration finds his peace.

The finest characters the world has seen have been men of this mould, — men who would not stop in the cheap attainments of virtue, but were always pressing on restlessly toward something that, costing them more, would be more acceptable to God. Nature has, perhaps, endowed them with much that

was lovely and good. As we have gazed at them, we have been satisfied with their virtue, would have accepted it as our own. But these were things of birth, temperament, inheritance. They were virtues, indeed, but they had been attained through no strife, had cost nothing. Could they sit down satisfied that they had answered the requisitions of their faith, had done their duty, when they only so followed the natural bent of their inclination? Should they do what David refused to do,* and offer to the Lord their God that which had cost them nothing? Certainly, not. Looking at themselves, they have detected certain weaknesses, wants, incongruities, certain strong and perverse inclinations, and there have they felt lie their work and their duty, — to subject the wayward, stubborn, and rebellious; to *acquire* virtue. That only they feel they can give to God which they have themselves gained. Only to exercise original virtues, and keep them from deterioration, would only be to give back to God his own without usury; that only they *give* which they have *won*, for which they have paid a price.

Let me give a plain example of what I mean. Suppose I have by nature a calm and equal temperament, never carried away by enthusiasm, never much depressed, not easily provoked. Then to be gentle and peaceable and kind, not easily disturbed, is no hard thing; I cannot help it; and, though I

* 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

may show more of such virtues than many others, and may get a human approbation for them, still I have only that which has come to me as easily as my breath comes. Suppose, now, I am naturally the reverse of all this, — easily disturbed, alternately elated and depressed, moved and swayed by sudden gusts of anger. As a child of God, my duty is to subdue this temper, to check this impatient and chafing spirit, to acquire calmness, self-control, and gentleness. I must do it at a cost. It will be long before I can show any advance. I shall suffer much, meet many rebuffs and defeats, but if I persevere I must finally succeed: and then I have an offering to lay before my God which I may bring honestly as my own; not the gift of my nature, but the acquirement of my struggle, for which I have paid a price. It is an offering that has cost me something, and I have a right to rejoice in it.

So it is with every acquirement. And it is to be noticed, that these things so hardly won, these virtues for which we pay the price, form not only the marked features in our character, but in the trying and doubtful periods of life they are the most reliable. A man who has only such as he receives from God in the outset, such as have come to him through no painstaking of his own, which were born in and with him, is never secure when he is taken out of a certain limited experience and routine. Take the instance of a young man whose secluded

life at home has all been very well, who is possessed of some naturally fine traits, but who has never cultivated his spirit in those directions in which nature had not blessed him. Send him to a city, or surround him with bad companions, or let one of a stronger mind and will than himself get hold of him. To your surprise, you will find him fail exactly where you had supposed he would be strong; that those natural gifts and traits in which you had confided as his safeguard have bent under him as a broken reed. And why? They came so easily that he had never thought of fortifying them: so much, he felt, was done for him, he could rely on what he had found within him; but, when he had brought them to the test, when he took them into new circumstances, they were wretchedly weak, and insured his overthrow. In the emergencies of life it is only those things that are ours because we have paid for them that we can depend on. If my gentleness is a matter of birth, I may never be sure but under some great provocation it may give way; but if, after long strife, I have succeeded in overcoming my impetuous passion, and gentleness has grown up on its ruins, I may feel sure, that, with the blessing of God, I shall always maintain my equanimity. And so through all characters. Strong men are strong from what they have *gained*, not from what was *given*. For what is of most worth in them they have paid a price.

In this way only we become worthy of our Christian name. So only we make any return to God for his favors. It is a very tame life that he leads who is never conscious of any stern strife with himself, any great lift in his own soul, who never sees any development of power in himself. It should be very unsatisfactory to him, and certainly is to his God. He may have a negative character for virtue, but it is not at all such a character as a disciple of Jesus should desire. I do not doubt that the little Galilean boy who so astonished the wise men in the temple received from his mother many gentle virtues; and that had he rested upon them, content with their natural development only, he had won many friends, lived many years, and died mourned over and soon forgotten. But there had been no cross then, no Saviour, no immortality revealed. The virtues that he received by birth were not enough for Jesus. He had a work before him, — to make himself the perfect man, to grow in grace, to become perfect through suffering, so to be able to reflect worthily the image of God. He would not give Him a service which cost him nothing; but, from the first conquest in the wilderness to the last in Gethsemane, he was *attaining*, till, at the cost of all a man holds dear, — his name, his friends, his life, he gave himself to his Father's will. As his professed disciples, we ought to follow in his steps. There is much to be done and gained before we are truly his,

and through many a weary struggle and many a wearing doubt must we first pass. It is so God would test our fealty. He sends temptation, privation, sorrow, suffering, loss. These mix up bitter ingredients in our cup. These call on us for action and for faith. We cannot meet these, we cannot surrender that which we love and cling to, without a strife. Sometimes it is like separating body and soul. Sometimes the cost seems too great. But when at last the spirit conquers, the temptation is overcome, the suffering or the sorrow patiently submitted to, when over the darkness the smile of faith comes, and on the wings of the storm peace; when at last the price is paid, — no words can give the spirit's satisfaction, or the holy trust with which it lays before its God the offering which has *cost*. At such moments, all the trouble of the world is merged in the one satisfying thought, that God's will has been done.

Friends! let us be of the number of hardy ones who spurn to give to God as an offering only that which cost us nothing. Let us pause at no difficulty, let us shrink at no labor, which shall make us more worthy of his blessing. The easy way is not *the* way. God demands, deliberately and for our good, *demands* that which costs, is satisfied only with that. And we ought not for a moment to think of giving any thing else, but to press on in the difficult way, reaching for and attaining one virtue after another,

glorying in that self-conquest which lifts us above the grasp and love of things temporal, and puts us among the eternal, trusting, at whatever cost, to win the Divine approbation, and in the kingdom of joy and peace to enter upon the inheritance of faith.

FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 7.

WHAT DID JESUS TRY TO DO?

BY

REV. RICHARD METCALF

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BOSTON.

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WHAT DID JESUS TRY TO DO?

BY REV. RICHARD METCALF.

"THIS is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." But save them from what?

I. *Not*, as men used to say, *from the power of Satan.* No such mighty demon as this Satan, whom men used to dread, ever existed to divide the sovereignty of the world with God, and wrest away from him the larger portion of his children. There is but one Being who rules all things in heaven and on earth. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without his permission; and as for us, his children, all the evil spirits in both worlds combined cannot pluck us out of his hands.

II. *Jesus did not come to save us from the wrath of God.* We ask no one to save us from Him who, in the hour of the world's greatest corruption, so loved it as to send his Son to redeem and bless it There is no room for cruel anger in the breast of Him whose whole nature is love; and, if it were

possible to be delivered from his hands, it would be the greatest misfortune that could happen to our souls.

III. *He did not try to save us from the punishment due our sins.* Those punishments are the natural results of our actions, like the pain which comes from thrusting the hand into the fire, and are sent, not in anger, but in mercy, to warn us away from evil. So the pains which follow our sins are the *remedies* by which God would cure our spiritual diseases. They are the *chastening* by which he would make us pure, chaste, fit to dwell for ever with him and the holy angels. They are the *afflictions* which endure for a time, only that they may work out an eternal weight of glory. They are all sent, not for his pleasure, but our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. We would no more ask God to remit these penalties, than we would ask a physician to keep back the draught which is to save our life. The cup which my Father giveth me to cure me of my sins, shall I not drink it?

IV. *Jesus came to save people from their sins.* Sin is the only real, lasting evil in the world, and all others are nothing as compared to it. Nothing else that can come to ourselves, our families, or our friends, is so deeply to be deplored as this, or so

carefully to be guarded against. It is sad, indeed, to lay in the grave a little child who was the light and joy of the household; but how much sadder to see such a child live, indeed, but live to be a dishonor and shame, — live to break the laws of God and of man, and sink into the depths of vice. You can comfort those whose children are but taken to heaven, where they always behold our Father who is in heaven; but may God comfort those whose children die to holiness, for the comforting words of man seem at such times but mockery. Sin is so much worse than death.

Salvation, then, is not deliverance from any present Satan or future hell or angry God, but from our own sins. It is deliverance from the evil habits that have bound us, from the evil passions that have conquered us, from the gross vices into which we have fallen. It is deliverance from every thing that is displeasing in the heavenly Father's sight; and, because such deliverance comes to us through the life and teachings of Jesus, it is said in the Gospel, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

O, friends! seek this salvation, and you will have nothing to fear. Through the power of Christian faith, cast out the evil thought from your mind, the evil desire from your heart. Break off from every

evil way, and resolve, by God's help, to do his will, and that alone, so long as you live. So shall you come off conqueror in the battle of life, through the help of Him who loves you, and shall dwell for ever in his kingdom of holiness and peace.

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25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

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FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 8.

THE NEW BIRTH.

BY

REV. RICHARD METCALF

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

THE NEW BIRTH.

BY REV. RICHARD METCALF.

JESUS speaks sometimes of *seeing* God's kingdom, and sometimes of *entering* it, meaning in both cases the same thing; and he says, that a man must be "born again" before enjoying this privilege. To understand what this privilege is, we have only to recall the common expression, that the state of Venetia has just "entered the kingdom of Italy." For what is it that has happened there? No change has taken place in the location of Venice. Its land and water remain just as they were, and the great mass of the population is the same. But the state which once obeyed the Austrian rule now acknowledges the Italian; substitutes Italian laws for Austrian laws, and the proclamation of Victor Emmanuel for those of Francis Joseph. Young men who once served in the Austrian army now volunteer in the Italian; and the taxes which formerly helped keep up the Austrian empire find their way into the Italian treasury. Little change can yet be seen in the people or their occupation; but the allegiance which, a year ago, was paid under compulsion

to one country, is to-day offered cheerfully to another; and we therefore say, that Venice has "entered the kingdom of Italy." So a man enters the kingdom of God when he gives himself up to the divine will, renders cheerful obedience to the divine laws, and consecrates himself to the divine service. In short, when you are loyal to God in body, mind, and soul, you will be in his everlasting kingdom; and this country will be in that kingdom when our statutes conform to his higher laws of justice, humanity, and right; and the whole world enters the same kingdom as soon as all disloyalty to God disappears, and his will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

What, then, is meant by the new birth through which we come into this right relation to God? It means exactly what you do in common speech, by saying, "This one or that must be an *entirely different* person before I'll trust him."—"He must be a *new man* before he'll be a true Christian." These conversational phrases are similar to those which the Bible everywhere uses to denote the change which a man who is not a Christian must undergo in becoming one. They are all varied modes of declaring that a great, a radical change is needed in such a man's character, heart, and life, before he can truly say, that he is a faithful subject of the heavenly kingdom, —a change so thorough, that Jesus called it being

"born again." No outward alteration of the conduct is enough to make a man a Christian; no putting on of solemn looks, going through with sacred forms, and making loud professions of faith. No: none of these are enough, unless the change is inward, as well as outward, and reaches way down into the heart, out of which are the issues of life. For it is the loyal heart which makes the loyal subject of the Heavenly King; and he who at heart is worldly, selfish, sinful, must be born again, in order to enter the kingdom of God. This thorough change of character and motives, which we often call a change of heart, is what Jesus requires of every one who is not leading a Christian life already.

It does not follow from this, that every thing in man is so far wrong that it has to be altered. A student for the ministry declared, that, when he became a Christian, he truly said, "The things I once hated, now I love; and the things I once loved, now I hate." And that venerated Baptist divine, Dr. Wayland, looked at the speaker, and asked, in his deep bass voice, "Sir, before you became a Christian, did you love your mother?" The question was answer enough; it showed, more clearly than any argument, that Christianity does not alter *every thing* in human nature, — much less do away with every thing in it, — but only aims to root up the evil, and fill the whole soul with good. If only we learn, as

we ought, to interpret the words which Jesus used in conversation, in the same way that we do our common speech, we shall see that, by the "new birth," he meant what any of us would in saying, 'An erring man must begin all over again with a new heart and new purpose, before he will be a faithful child of God." As soon as a man's great desire is to love and serve God, he has been born again.

But this change is not wrought on you by the mighty power of God, while you remain passive. He does not stretch forth his hand from the heavens to drag you into his kingdom of peace and love. He does not change a human soul from sin to holiness by any irresistible grace, — like the old magicians, whose wands were said to change stones and brutes into thinking, loving men. If you wait for God to make you all over again, while you do nothing for yourself, you will wait through all eternity, and never see salvation come from him; but you must work with him in holy fear and trembling earnestness, and then the happy result is sure. He gives the powers, but you must exercise them; he gives the opportunities, but you must improve them; he sends down his Holy Spirit to your side, but you must open wide the door of your heart, and give it a cordial welcome. The divine and the human must work together, in, with, and for each other, and then you will enter the kingdom of God.

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A WORD TO THE THOUGHTFUL.

BY REV. J. B. HARRISON.

THE faith most professed in our country, and which I once held, is, when rendered in familiar phrase, as follows: —

1st, Two deities, — God and Satan. How the universe could ever exist between them, I never could guess.

2d, Two systems or kingdoms, headed as above, quarrelling eternally for possession of the universe Satan on earth victorious!

3d, Two orders of men, — a few saints, and a great many sinners. Is not this the very essence of all monopoly, arrogance, and selfishness?

4th, Two destinies, — a most miserable, selfish heaven, very thinly settled; and a most populous, popular hell for the rest.

How unreasonable, heathenish, and distressing such a faith!

The faith that compelled my acceptance is this: —

1st, One God, the Father, — Cause, past, present, and future, supreme, perfect. "Thou shalt have no other gods."

2d, One system, — the universe; perfect means to perfect ends. Sin, with retribution its consequence, — terrible facts, but no exception. "The wrath of man shall praise thee." — "If I make my bed in hell, behold! Thou art there."

3d, One brotherhood, — the whole human family; "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." — "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." — "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." God's love is not human hate.

4th, One destiny, — universal human conversion and progress: Knowledge, Discipline, humble, faithful Self-culture, the means under God; Christ and the Bible as helpers; Christ's spirit, the test; his life, the example; reason, the interpreter. Christ came expressly to seek and save that which was lost. No wise earthly parent will hopelessly reject or doom any child of his. There is no enemy but sin, — our own evil-doing. God supreme, always helpful; and Humanity, needy, but inviolable. LET US OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

Dear reader, let this sweet, precious, God-like faith into your soul, and it will inspire and equip you for a life-battle with evil.

There is no place or room in God's universe for an ETERNAL devil and hell, except as they are conjured up, and forced into good company by heathen superstition. KICK THEM OUT, — out of your own

heart and faith, and as fast as possible out of society altogether. If the Lord be God, let us serve (and preach) him. The universe is none too large for God; and surely, in our poor hearts, there should be no spare room for Satan. Two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. Wrath against sin, without pity for the sinner, is utterly malignant, destroying the patient, but perpetuating the disease. God, the Supreme, ordains happiness for well-doing; sorrow and suffering as punishment for sin. Reform is the only conceivable wise object of punishment. Herein justice and mercy embrace each other. God is pitiful and kind here, even to the unthankful and evil: is he a selfish, torturing tyrant hereafter, crushing out Christian sympathy and love for the wretched and erring there? No: he is unchangeably the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Nor yet, on the other hand, is he weakly indifferent to the wrong. Hence he will, in all worlds, visit sin with sorrow and suffering; demonstrating thereby the awful guilt, folly, and damage of sin, the necessity of reform and constant right action. Think not, by any belief, creed, or death-bed repentance, by any gain or success, to cheat God's eternal law of retribution. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Our only safety is to cease from evil, HERE AND NOW, BECAUSE IT IS EVIL; and learn to do right,

BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT. How CAN we, children of that heavenly King, already entered upon our wonderful inheritance, delight in wrong? How mean and foolish, in this latter day and Christian land, to abuse ourselves and the dear Father, God; to put Christ, our elder Brother, to open shame, in current waste of precious time and of the most noble opportunities! I appeal to you, reader, by every thing manly and precious, by every desire for true gain or happiness, by every shuddering horror of things damaging and hateful, — DO RIGHT; AVOID AND RESIST EVIL.

God gave you many faculties, every one of which should be developed, in exact balance and harmony, by proper culture. At the head of these — dearest, sweetest, divinest, sole umpire and regulator of all — is the religious or spiritual faculty, reverence or conscience, the anti-selfish principle, that which recognizes obligation or duty: I OUGHT, OR OUGHT NOT. As you wisely cultivate this faculty in love to God and man, so will your life be complete, happy, useful. If you neglect, so will your soul and life on earth be blind, aimless, unstrung, discordant. Then, as you would know and love yourself wisely; as you love health, beauty, manhood, — so must you, by all right means, recognize and strengthen this supremest gift or faculty, whose sole office is to invigorate and elevate human character. To be true to your highest

nature, to God and truth, is the sublime behest of religion. Oh that God's Spirit, and our exceeding necessity, might cause us to flow together, in unity of the spirit, to labor for a genuine, permanent revival of religion, — life's great work, — the redemption of every soul from ignorance and vice, sin and sorrow! May God and all good ministering spirits help us!

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BY

JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
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THROUGH NARROW TO BROAD

BY JOHN F. W. WARE.

THERE is a great question quaintly put by the writer of the Book of Esdras, one of the books of the Apocrypha, — "If he went not through the narrow, how could he come to the broad?" It is a question to think of. It covers a universal law, and that law vital to us in all our affairs. Before it can get to the broad, every thing must go through the narrow.

Forgetfulness of this is constantly embarrassing and involving us in fatal mistakes. We expect immediate results. We wish, we plan, we pray for them. Not God's law, but the law of our impatience, governs us. We fret at delays, at slow, small gains, consider them unnatural, when they are simply the inevitable laws of progress, the conditions through which all things inevitably pass in their way toward accomplishment. We constantly abandon as failures those things which are simply passing through the narrow on the way

to the broad, doing injustice to much honest effort, and choking in the outset much hopeful attempt. As well pluck up the blade-corn, and fling it in despair away, because it is not the full ear. It is overlooked by us that all-important and vast results have had their day of small things; that it was so with this world on which we tread, which is even now only on its passage toward the broad; that it is so with all we see, and must be so with all we do. Impatient man chafes at the barriers Omnipotence respects, and, though he knows that God labors through the slow development of centuries, himself expects to move all things at his bidding to do his will. His very haste destroys his capacity to do. How many abortive attempts lie all along the way of a man's experience, — abortive because of this! Man cannot thwart God. He who does not himself hurry, will not allow hurry in others. His law and will prove too much for man. Since he has made the narrow as the necessary way to the broad, man shall in vain attempt to reach the broad without it.

See proofs of this in nature, — the earth passing through the narrow, when it was without form and void, till, under the plastic hand of God, it has come out into this broad beauty and vigor we now see and enjoy; the seed pushing from its narrow home in the earth into the broad tree; the river forcing itself

through narrow channels till it finds the wide expanse of ocean; the day passing the portals of the morning, glowing only at length into the splendor of broad noon. See it also in purposes which God would establish among men. How gradually they are developed! how to human eye they halt sometimes, while they yet move ceaselessly by an Almighty will! Shut up sometimes in frailest tenements have been the hopes and liberties of a world, — all that had been done seemingly extinguished, God's work and man's work vain; and yet the night has been precursor of the day, weakness the foreshadowing of power, that which seemed a slumber, well-nigh unto death, the silent gathering-up of energies that were to burst resistlessly, sweeping before them the very evils that had gloried in being their masters. There was a time when the hope of the Hebrew lay in the wicker basket rocked by the waters of the Nile; yet the infant that smiled on the rescuing hand of Pharaoh's daughter was to be greater than Pharaoh's self, — the saviour of his own people, the great prophet of God. There was, again, a time when the hope of a world lay cradled in a manger, when Herod's sword hung glittering above it. Surely it was, as man sees, but a desperate chance, that through this child, so beset, the great work of truth should reach its consummation. The hope of man was in the narrow then. But God was moving as he was before, and

thirty summers were scarcely passed ere the narrow had expanded into the broad, and the child Jesus had become the man from heaven, Christ, Saviour, and Lord.

In no other way than this can any thing succeed. There must be small beginnings to all large issues; there must be slow progress to all real success; there must be a narrow way to all broad result. Nothing comes full-grown into the world, either from God or man, from the brain or from the hand. The law to which God stoops, environs man as in bands of adamant. It controls and masters him, and we only kick the pricks when we rebel, and attempt to go against it. As it is the law of the universe, the law by which all general, material results have been brought about among men, so is it the necessity of each man in every sphere of labor and duty.

Take business. Somehow the notion seems in these days prevalent, that money may be made at once. A man has not to carve out his fortune, but leaps into it. It is created, as Aladdin's palace, in a night. This is one of the errors which cannot be too soon exploded. A lucky man may now and then acquire a fortune, he himself can hardly tell you how; but the legitimate operations of trade — those to which every honest man is to look — are, and always have been, and always must be, slow in their results. The ant does not more slowly rear her house than does

the rich man acquire riches. Resolute, dogged industry does it. Small means, small gains, the narrow way of thrift, — this it is which opens upon the broad success. Young persons growing up and going forward do not see this. They see only results, which are evident and tangible. Processes, which are slow, tedious, silent, constant, they do not understand. The narrow way they do not detect, only the broad accomplishment. The son ambitiously begins where the toiling father leaves off. He demands for his outset what his parent has earned as his reward. The young man's business must be large, extended. It must have ships and bales and foreign correspondents, the paraphernalia and credit and honor of older men. The new home of youth must be all and more than the old home was. Comforts, luxuries, must be had. The narrow way of prudence, economy, will not be tolerated. What the father may do rightly enough, wisely enough, in the son is the grossest extravagance. He will be content with no less. He turns his back upon the narrow, ridicules the small way in which things used to be done; insists upon, clutches at, the broad. What ensues? How many promising and otherwise worthy young men have you and I known utterly ruined in this way? How much that might have been honestly available for the just purposes of life has been crippled and lost by this early mistake!

It is not possible so to succeed. Success lies in the old way, — by walking through, and working in the narrow, before you can get at the broad. The few exceptions at which men may point cannot refute the rule. The only rule that can be laid down, the only way that is secure, is just this embodied in the question, "If he went not through the narrow, how could he come to the broad?"

Next there is character, about which men make a similar mistake. Character is a vast result; it is the broad into which a man comes after time and labor and perseverance. No man has a character till after he has had experience, and proved himself to be worthy. There are too many men who do not so regard it, and are not willing to take that pains with themselves so necessary to the establishment of a genuine character, are not willing to wait and suffer long with themselves; who either become discouraged and give it up, let it go, as a thing in their case too obstinate to be managed, or satisfy themselves with that small attainment they easily and early make. The men of mark did not do so, — the men who have elevated the moral standard of society, and are the world's best benefactors; the men who have walked at large in the broad power of life. We do not see it, — it lies far behind, — but they came through the narrow. Character in them was a slow and tedious acquisition; and, could they roll

back the tide of time that has gone, and lay before you the secret experiences, the trials, the discomfitures, the mortifications, out of which at last grew this broad result which you respect, you would know that before you lay the same work, if you would enjoy the same respect, and enter upon the same rest.

Take the next higher step, and the same thing holds. In the attainment of personal holiness, as in this last, or in those others, it is just as true, "if a man go not through the narrow, how shall he come into the broad?" We see that even in Jesus this was not a thing at once attained. Though we may not know exactly what that means, the Evangelist tells us that he increased in wisdom as well as stature, and grew in favor with God as with man. The rudiments of the Divine life in the child swelled into the full proportions of that life in the man. Nazareth was the nursery of virtues which Jerusalem, the Jordan, Calvary, and Gethsemane attest. There were strifes, no doubt, there; there was the day of trial; there, with Mary to support and encourage him, he trod the narrow way which opened, through his ministry upon the broad. Virtue had its day of small things in him as it must in all. We cannot be exempt; nor ought we to be discouraged when, in our own experience, we find how weak we are, and how slowly faith develops; how dead devotion is;

how hard to move is love; how busy and mad and tyrannical are passions. We ought not to despair at what we see in others of greater attainments, nor consider them more favored than are we. They have grown ripe by the same experiences which may ripen us. They walked the narrow way, else they had not now been in the broad. They once stumbled, and were perplexed; but they took courage, and pressed on and attained. They passed the river, and gained the sea.

I think it important that every seeker after religion remember that results do not manifest themselves readily or in a very marked manner; that a man must walk the narrow first, and walk it painfully and long. The extravagances into which enthusiasts have been led have tended to foster some such idea; but it is not a correct one. The soul of man does not readily — why, we may never satisfactorily decide — yield itself to religious obligations. The empire of the spirit over the flesh is won only by hard and continued striving. The life of God in the soul no more than the life of man in the body comes at once into its perfection. We must be babes in Christ first, before we can wear the image of the man Christ Jesus. Along a narrow way must we walk, in order to enter into life, — narrow not only because of our own weakness and slow attainment, but narrow because of other difficulties which beset

it. Outside himself, man finds that which hinders him, — privations, disappointments, trials; all the varied disciplines which make so large a part of our individual probation. All these things and more, and all these in their complexity, make the way which opens upon life narrow indeed, tending to discouragement, and tempting the soul's bitter cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But, "if he went not through the narrow, how could he come to the broad?" If he go not along this way faithfully and bravely, how shall he enter upon life, that broad field of present duty, that broader field of future hope? That is the question which can be answered only in one way. The narrow path must be trod, — the way of difficulty, the way of small things. All that it entails must be endured for what it gives beyond, — the broad, full, boundless sea of life, on whose farther shore is builded the city whose builder and maker is God.

If one went not through the narrow of infancy, how could he come to the broad life of manhood? If one went not through the narrow of education, how could he come to the broad life of the scholar? If friendship go not through the narrow of acquaintance, how shall it reach the broad solidity and confidence of love? If the man went not through the narrow of duty and discipline, how could he come out into the broad life of religion? If the soul went

not through the narrow present, with its imperfections, its ignorance, its trials, how could it come into the broad future, with all that is its of perfection and knowledge and peace? Through the strait lies the way to the broad sea; through the strait gate, by the narrow way, is the entrance upon every broad performance in life, — be it business, philanthropy, science, art, character, religion; or be it still more, the broad, illimitable future. We are wise who do not halt because of the straitness of the way, but accept it as the condition of possessing what we covet, lying beyond, — who are willing to suffer strait things, and hope for wide; to labor and endure now, trusting to reap and enjoy by and by. He who waits the tardy movements, the slow ripening of creation, the years before the acorn drops from the oak, who waits the tardier movements of human generations, suffering his vast plans to pass through the narrow of their fidelity, so teaches us the law himself has imposed on his own purposes, the law to which man in all his doings must succumb. Happy he who shall always remember, that if he will not go through the narrow, neither shall he come to the broad!

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I AM THE WAY.

JOHN F. W. WARE.

UNITARIAN HEADQUARTERS
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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

I AM THE WAY.

BY JOHN F. W. WARE.

WHAT is a way? It is a path, a road, a means which we make use of in passing to a given point. It is not that point itself, but it is the road to it. It has no other purpose, or function; it can be and do nothing else. *It is only, and always, a way.*

Here is just the claim of Jesus, just what he says he is, and the all that he is. He is the way: not the point his disciples desired to attain, not the place they hoped to reach, not the end which lay before them; but the way to these. And he would not have said *way* unless he meant to be understood as using the word in its common, simple, every-day meaning; unless it was his deliberate purpose to offer himself to man as the means by which he could attain the great, desired end, — that oneness with the supreme Power which he showed that he had, which he prayed that his friends might reach to, which every one of us who has any spiritual aspirations longs for. Just what Jesus said he was, he meant his disciples

to believe him to be. As once before he called himself the *door* opening upon the security and quiet of the fold, the only true mode of access; so now is he the *way*, the only method of approach to a true knowledge of, a true life with, God.

Now the theologies do not agree to this. They have a notion of something more in Jesus than that which he claims for himself. They will have it not only that he is the *way* by which men are to go, but the point they are to arrive at. He is both road and place. He is not only the way to God, but God also. You would never think of saying that the way to Washington and Washington itself are one and the same thing, identical. Any man — the very men who believe this thing theologically — in any practical matter would see the incongruity, the absurdity, at once; and should you or I to-morrow undertake to convince this community that Washington and the road to it are the same thing, we should find ourselves reckoned among knaves, idiots, or madmen. It will not do to use such terms toward those who hold by the other, because it is a matter of vital religious faith; but why is it that there is absurdity in the one case, and only the highest, purest faith in the other? There is no other answer than this: that the persistent *perversions* of ages — honest, sincere, we will allow, still *perversions* — have got a hold upon the credence of re-

ligious teachers, which makes them insist upon turning their backs upon the simple truth of Jesus, while they accept the complications and confusion of human thought; turning the bread of life into stone. A stone may be better than bread for an ostrich, but the human soul has no analogous power of digestion.

Our Saviour speaks of himself as the way by which a man must come to God. Now what do we do with a way? We follow it till it brings us to the end. We do not stay in it, having entered upon it, loiter or remain content, but push on. We should follow this way till it brings us to God. Do the majority of Christians do this? I think not. I think they not only know very little about, but that they never come very near to, God. The demand, the pressure is, come to Jesus, — not Jesus as the *way* simply, but Jesus as the *end*. I confess myself not amazed merely, but pained, at the way God — the venerable name, and venerable fact — is left out in the higher exhortings of those who will have it that they alone have the true faith. I wait and ache for that name over all names. I ask, "Why stop with your work half done? What you say is very true. *Do* come to Jesus; but only as the one appointed *way* for you clearly to find out your God." He never asked his disciples to pause when they had come to him; but his word was, take your cross and follow

me. And whither was he going? Even to his Father and our Father. And are we asked for different service? Does Gospel or Epistle anywhere demand of us less, or other, than was demanded of him?

Think how it narrows down the Christian work and Christian life. Only to come to Christ is to shut us out from all that which he saw beyond himself, which he said he did not know. It is to keep us from the Father's arms, and make him unreal to us, who to a true faith is the realest Being conceivable. The younger Beecher, much as he startled the religious world, but confessed the inevitable result of this teaching, when he said that the Father was but a flimsy film to him, and Christ the only reality: while the elder, dying in the full fruitage and odor of sanctity, replied to those about him, anxiously asking if he saw Jesus, "It is all God." That I conceive to have been the Saviour's effort while on earth, — to reveal God, to interpose himself only as a clear medium through which the faith in man might be lifted up until it embraced him, — that I take to be the mission of his spirit now, which is still immanent in his word, its vigor and life to us. Not that we might stop in him, gaze at him, be satisfied with him as the *revealed*, did he live and labor; but that he might be simply *revealer*. And I think nothing could give him more poignant

anguish than this transfer of the affection and allegiance of the human heart to himself, — the very thing which gave such evident pain when he was on the earth; the very thing he so pointedly rebuked.

Our Unitarian ground is certainly more consonant with Scripture. To us, Christ is the way to God. In no conceivable manner is he God; but a separate, inferior being, distinct in every attribute of personality as it is possible to be. He stands before us by the facts of his history; and calls us, through his faith, his experience, his life, to come to that great Being from whom we all proceed, to whom we all tend. He calls us to himself, only to point us on; and stands no prominent, bewildering personality to distract from God, or absorb into himself that which belongs to God; but the one true and living way by which we find out and come to God, — him first, last, and best.

I am going a little farther in my pressure of this analogy, because I want to speak the conviction that is in me as clearly as I may. I said just now, that, when we had arrived at our journey's end, we had nothing more to do with the road; only was it a memory dear to us in proportion to the dearness of the spot to which it had brought us. The road that, in my school-boy days, led me back to my father's house, — it is like no other road I ever travelled. I knew it well. I loved it. I did not linger on it. I

pressed through it; and when I found myself within those dear old walls, and felt the grasp and smile, and tone of love, I remembered the road only as my way of coming to my father. I loved it, I blessed it, for what it did; but it was my father I wanted, and in him all. So I cannot feel that I am wrong; that I take any thing from the *real* position of Jesus, — the subordination in which he chose to place and keep himself, — if I say, that, when, through a knowledge of Jesus, we are brought to God, our souls and lives in unison with his will, the work of Jesus is done; and he must cease to be the first and active principle and affection with us, that God may be all in all. I do not mean, of course, that the Saviour is ever to be forgotten; but, in urging a sinner or a half-believer or yourself to come to him, should it not be as a preliminary step merely? Then, when the man is animated by the Master's spirit, should it not be said to him, "All this, so far, is introductory. You have learned of Jesus how to go to God. *Go to God now*, carrying and supported by memories of what he has been to you"? It is God, the living God, only God, the being Infinite, beyond all Jesus was, for which the thirsty soul cries out. The longer I live, the more I know, the deeper I get into life's mystery, the more my way leads along the devious paths, the more I know what trial means, the more I crave God. I confess it is not Christ I

want. I do not feel myself led to him as to an end. I am not satisfied there. It is God I ask for, God I want; no other, none between, save as a guide to him. It confuses me to be told I am to find this or that in Jesus. I say, "No: I find such things in God." I cannot grasp the idea of two separate persons having such similar functions. I find in God only what others find in Christ. I think other men have made him a usurper. While they leave God in the material universe, they have taken him clean out of the universe of faith and life. He is left to the outside affairs, while all that is near and precious to the individual falls under the charge of Christ. I cannot take it in. My Bible calls Jesus the way to God. I use a way to get to an end. When I reach the end, I have done with the way. When Christ brings me to God, God is my all. The work of Christ is done. No matter what the authority of synod, catechism, council, antiquity, I cannot make my Bible tell me any thing but the absolute supremacy of him whom Jesus Christ teaches us to call Father; I cannot make the office of that Christ any other or more than to make known that Fatherhood, and offer himself as the way to its blessing and rest. I accept him only as that; and then there is to me clear, shining, single, above all, — as that clear, shining, single pillar of eternal ice above the ever-frozen sea, — that Being of ineffable majesty, wisdom, and

love to whom our Saxon tongue has given the name God, — the good. To him would I give glory and honor for the mission of such a one as Jesus; and Jesus would I accept but as the appointed way to him.

"Thou art the way; and he who sighs,
Amid this starless waste of woe,
To find a pathway to the skies,
A light from heaven's eternal glow,
By thee must come, thou Gate of love,
Through which the saints undoubting trod,
Till faith discovers, like a dove,
An ark, a resting-place, in God."

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KEEP TO THE RIGHT,

AS THE LAW DIRECTS.

THAT is our common law, the law of the highway, as everybody knows. Everybody observes it. Every day we travel by it. Comfort, facility, security, are because of it. To violate it is an outrage, makes danger, is punishable.

When the way is narrow and easily obstructed, and there is likely to be a press, as at the draw of a bridge, a sign is put up conspicuously, that men may be warned of the need of extra care, — "*Keep to the right, as the law directs.*" So confusion is avoided, accident prevented. It is a very simple direction, but a very vital law. Its observance is one of those little things to which our daily lives are always in debt.

We want to make this a law in the way of life, and to be just as careful in observing it. There is a Divine law, — *Keep to the right, as the law directs;* and in a way of itself narrow, often narrowing suddenly, which has many obstructions in it, we

need, with every caution, to hold firmly to the law, — the only safe clew amid the thronging crowd of temptations, and the perplexing intricacies of our journey. It would be no bad plan to take this as the motto for our lives; to have it printed or painted, and hung in our chambers; to repeat it morning and evening, and re-repeat it many times a day; and, if we want a device for a coat of arms, what better legend than this, — "*Keep to the right, as the law directs.*"

All our difficulties grow out of the neglect of this law: so fundamental, so vital, is it. It is easy to know the right. Do not believe any man who tells you it is not. Do not believe your own soul, if it tell you so. The rules, the laws, of right are few and simple. They would not confuse a child. The beauty of childhood is in its clear sight of them. It is easier to keep to the right than we allow, — to think right, to feel right, to do right. The only difficulty is that we do wrong easily, too; and we prefer the wrong, forget, violate the law, and get all snarled up through refusing its simple order. *Keep* to the right and you will get on smoothly; all opposing things will pass you harmlessly at the left. You need not fear for yourself. There may be crash and wreck all about you, but you are under the law. You are safe. The way that is a peril to others, the way that puts them to constant terror, the way in

which they meet obstacles they cannot surmount, the way in which they are overthrown, ruined, is to you a peaceful way to a safe place. It is not the way that decides the result of the journey, but the fidelity with which we keep the law of the road.

The common law is of a human wisdom, the dictate of necessity; the divine law is of a Supreme wisdom, the dictate of an equal necessity. Do not respect and obey the less, and neglect the greater. Be at least as wise in things spiritual as in things temporal. If you prize your own self-respect, if you value peace, if you desire heaven, "KEEP TO THE RIGHT, AS THE LAW DIRECTS!"

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THAT is not true. There are a great many nice-looking phrases which have been going about unquestioned for a good many years, receiving great hospitality of men, which, the moment you come really to examine them, are only false and bad and mischievous, — very wolves in sheep's clothing. Having the form of truth and wisdom, themselves they are neither wise nor true.

This is one of them; perhaps the worst, the most false, the most mischievous, — certainly the most popular, and very largely received, and acted upon. And yet I don't think it can stand a moment before a clear, sharp, close, Christian analysis.

Honesty is a cardinal virtue. It is the corner-stone to the fabric of human intercourse and life. Without it you build upon the sand. Itself a basis, it requires a sub-basis, a something to stand on that cannot be shaken or threatened by any assault. Shall that basis be policy, — a word which, on its

very face, in its very sound, carries something of uncertainty, unreliability with it? If a man says, Such is *my policy*, do you feel toward him and his purpose as if he said, Such is *my principle*? If a man urges a thing because it is politic, above all, if he teach his children so, do you deal with him or trust in him as if he urged it simply because it is right? Is not the politic man a suspected man, a slippery man, a mean man; and is not the politic thing just that, and can you build any security upon it? I say, if you build your honesty upon policy, it will slip away from you. There will come the time when honesty will not be the best policy: it has come to many; and, then, where are you and where is honesty? You will not follow it; but you will follow policy, and it will land you where all bad following inevitably does. If I knew a man who made this proverb his motto and rule, who taught it and defended it, who did his trade by it, and walked before man and God in its light, I should watch that man closely; for I should be sure that the crowding, importunate temptations of life would at some time so break upon him, that he would fall with a great fall. If they should not, his escape would be so as by a miracle.

You may say, if you like, that honesty is the best wisdom, the best prudence, the best integrity, the best principle; because all these are first-class

virtues and necessities. But policy is never a virtue or a necessity. It is never better than a make-shift. It has the thin veneer of morality, but not the soul of it. You trust it at your peril. The very moment that you need stay and staff it fails you.

Build better. Put your honesty where it cannot be touched, where it will support you, where you can be sure of it. Ground it so that the very gates of hell cannot prevail against it. Stay it, as every principle must be stayed, on faith in Jesus Christ, — himself the mirror of honesty as of all virtue, whose only rule for doing was God's will. You cannot conceive of him as for a moment thinking of policy. The spirit of his religion rebels against, condemns, it. He and it demand of us only one line of conduct, — to do the right, keep to the right, not because of any policy, which is human, but because of principle, which is DIVINE.

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THE

UNPARDONABLE SIN.

BY

JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.
BOSTON.

THE

UNPARDONABLE SIN.

THERE is none. What is sin? The best definition, perhaps, is that of the Apostle, — "Sin is the transgression of the law." The man is a sinner by transgressing the law. He does not sin except by transgression. He cannot inherit sin; because sin is transgression, — a positive, definite, individual, wilful act. There is, there can be, no other sin. Theology says so, not the Bible. Adam's sin was his sin, nobody's else; Eve's sin was her sin, nobody's else; my sin is mine, your sin is yours. Consequences may be transmitted, inherited; not sins.

You have no sin but your own to think about, to shun, to repent of. Can you so sin that God will not forgive you? No: unless you refuse to repent, — the one only condition on which God will grant pardon; so that, whether there is for you an unpardonable sin or not, depends on you alone. Keep the condition, fulfil the terms, and though your

sins be deepest, most desperate, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Repent after the godly sort, with the sorrow that needs no repentance; reform; quit the old, live the new, life; and God must forgive. Even He cannot afford to break his word; and such is his word by the mouth of prophet, apostle, and Son.

That Son was one day beset by the Pharisees, with more than their usual obstinacy and hate. They turned every thing against him. They had surpassed themselves in unreasonable spite, wilful prejudice and blindness. He had argued with them before; he had expostulated, he had done every thing to enlighten and instruct them. The hardness of their hearts was deliberate and dogged. Utterly in despair, he spoke at last in that strong, sweeping way he sometimes spoke, and which it is so difficult for us to understand and explain, to limit to the occasion or expand into a general truth, — "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven." That was their then sin; and they would not repent it, so bad, so mad, were they. Out of this declaration has grown a widespread horror of some nameless sin which a man may commit, which cannot be pardoned, — a belief that has haunted and made wretched the lives of many good people, and driven some men mad.

But over against this single statement uttered under peculiar circumstances, to rebuke the desperate wickedness of the Pharisees, are his calm, deliberate utterances at so many times, about the disposition and ability of God to forgive man, with the single antecedent condition of repentance and reformation. He makes no exception. The portrayal of the Divine character, as well as all that is said directly upon this subject, is such that it is impossible that there should be any sin, or any sinful life, that will not be forgiven when the man has turned from his sin.

But must you not rely upon "the merits of Christ"? Not at all. They will not help you. It is your own *de*-merit that sinks you in sin, and by your own merit — the degree of your fidelity — will you be lifted out of your sin. When Zaccheus was convinced that he had been a sinner, he did not say, "Lord, I rely upon your merits;" but he said, "Lord, if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." That is a necessary part of the repentance not to be repented of, — *not expiation on the part of Christ, but restitution on the part of the man*; a making-up, by the works of repentance, for the wrong done by the sin. To repent, is not to feel sorry, to do so no more; but to repent is to make good, so far as in you lies, the loss and damage of your sin to yourself and others and God.

You need have no question about the Divine pardon, if, only with the humility and the persistence of the prodigal son, you show the sincerity of your contrition by the after godliness of your life. Make that your aim: your pardon is secure.

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INTO TEMPTATION.

BY

JOHN F. W. WARE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON.

University Press : John Wilson & Son,
Cambridge.

ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION

ALTHOUGH I could never see the special pertinency at the time, there has always seemed to me peculiar meaning in the Saviour's words to his drowsy disciples, "Watch and pray that ye *enter* not into temptation." My only satisfactory thought about it is, that he was thinking of Judas, and how by littles, from taking out of the bag he kept, he had grown to the shame of betraying his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Take care, my poor friends, he says, how you enter temptation. Lo! he is at hand, whose betrayal of me is because he did not watch and pray against entrance into temptation.

How strange that we do not realize that the whole thing lies here in a nutshell! Never enter into temptation, never put your foot over the threshold, and you are safe. You may defy any wile or power. Your life is charmed. Once over that threshold, once take but a single wrong step, and you cannot be sure to what it will lead you.

Temptation has a way of dragging men imperceptibly, by little and little, down into the deepest and foulest abyss. If you give it the least advantage, it is your master. Only let it get a hold, and its clutch is as the clutch of death.

The old Romans had a wise saying, — *Obsta principiis*, "Resist beginnings." That is what you would do, if you felt the symptoms of disease. You would send for the doctor, stay the sickness, at once. Will you be less wise, less prudent, when symptoms of soul-disease are evident? Jesus resisted beginnings, the entrance into temptation. The devil got no hold upon him. He was safe. It made no odds what power of evil was brought to bear upon him. He would not *enter* temptation, so the tide and whirlpool of sin could not sweep him away.

Be as divinely wise. Never enter into temptation. Give it no vantage. Meet, resist, overcome it at the outset, while it is a little thing. An infant could have strangled Goliah in his cradle; but an army fled before his manhood. Only be firm. Refuse to enter into temptation. You shall be temptation's lord.

FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 16

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

A Lay Sermon.

UNITARIAN HEADQUARTERS
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BY

MISS M. P. WELLS.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

MY text is the twenty-seventh Psalm, especially the last verse. My discourse will be divided into a preamble, six heads, and a few remarks on what has been said.

We all want to be happy: in early youth we all expect to be, as a matter of course. We look forward into the future with eager, confident eyes, so impatient we can hardly wait, for that vague but glorious something we feel sure awaits us there. The days, the months, the years, slip away, and we find ourselves living common, prosy, work-a-day lives, like every one else; we are constrained, hemmed in, by circumstances against which we are helpless; we find we must give up the plan, the hope in which our heart, our very life, is bound up; the thing that is most distasteful and dreadful to us happens to us, nevertheless; and death takes the dear friends, — so much a part of ourselves, it never occurred to us to imagine life without them And

this is the realization of that splendid future we so longed for! One of the most critical as well as bitterest moments of existence is when the heavy burden of life first falls consciously on the careless, happy heart of youth, merrily dancing down the "long path." Scales seem to fall from our eyes. Suddenly we notice how few people look happy, how every middle-aged face bears deep lines, how the light and sparkle has faded out of the eye, how often the voice has a complaining, at best a resigned, tone. These faces were all young, bright, expectant, once. Thoreau says, "The man builds a woodshed from the material the youth collected for a golden bridge to the moon." Is it all really true, then, that we have read in poetry with a half-sad, half-sentimental pleasure? Is life a "fleeting dream, for man's delusion given"? Is all its song "endure and die"? Is "man made to mourn"? Is that miserable saying of somebody really true, — "Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret"? And what shall we do under this new aspect of life? Shall we grow bitter, sneering, cynical? Shall we rush from one excitement to another in the mad pursuit of happiness? Or shall we sit down despondently, fold our hands, and wait for the end, not far off at the longest?

The answer we give to these questions is a turning-point in life. For my part, believing fully in

the possibility of happiness, even in this "vale of tears," if so we must call it, I shall proceed to give my receipt therefor.

Firstly, — If possible, be well, and have a good appetite. If these conditions are yours, the battle is already half gained. Many soul and heart troubles are really located in the stomach, unromantic as it sounds. Ill-health causes the blues, and the blues cause ill-health: so we should cultivate the body's health for the spirit's, and equally *vice versa*.

Secondly, — Be busy. Fill the hours so full of useful and interesting work, that there shall be no time for dwelling on your troubles, that "the day shall dawn full of expectation, the night fall full of repose."

> "A millstone and the human heart are driven ever round:
> If they have nothing else to grind, they must themselves be ground."

Make interests for yourself in life. Realize that you are a living soul, with responsibilities, glorious opportunities, now, and eternity hereafter; and be ashamed to find life vacant, tiresome.

Thirdly, — Forget yourself. People cannot be happy who are constantly dwelling in thought upon themselves, their own perfections, their own shortcomings, what people think of them, and so on. The heaviest burden of life is often ourselves, — self-disgust. From every thing else we can escape;

but there is no getting away from ourselves. It is, too, a burden we must bear alone. To keep ourselves to ourselves, is a lesson we learn early in life. The only way to attain peace is, having done our best, whether the result be a success or a failure, forget it, think no more about it. Nothing more surely produces a morbid, diseased tone of mind, than the habit of constant self-contemplation.

Fourthly, — Expect little. Expect little of life, not too much of your friends. Living solely in to-day, not venturesomely intermeddling with the future, any pleasure it has for us will come wearing the added charm of surprise; and we shall have to mourn no "might-have-beens," ruins of air-castles we have built only to crush us in their fall.

Fifthly, — Be determined to be happy. Make the most of every happiness that comes to you. Look on the bright side of every thing. Cheerfulness is not always spontaneous: it is greatly a matter of habit, and bears cultivation. One who can contrive to bear a smiling face through a world where there are so many troubled hearts, may unconsciously be a public benefactor; for the "merry heart doeth good like medicine," not alone to its possessor.

Lastly, — and herein, after all, lies the great secret of happiness, — trust in God. Believe that God is, that he really knows what is best for you;

believe this truly, and the bitterness is gone from life. Half our troubles we make ourselves by resisting, rebelling against our misfortunes. As soon as we can accept them, can say and believe they are for the best, their sting is gone. Trusting in God, we shall not fancy we should be happy were we only somewhere else, had we only that something else which seems to us wanting in our lives. We shall feel that God put us exactly where we are, sent or withheld whatever was right; and our part is only to do the best we can with the "talents" he has lent us, be they ten, five, or only one. I notice Christ did not say, "If any will come after me, let him take up a cross, and follow me." No: it is, "Let him take up *his* cross," — that thing which is most disagreeable, painful to us; that thing whose shadow darkens all our lives; that is the very thing we are asked to bear, — and to bear not complainingly, not stoically, but trustingly, and if possible cheerfully. The soul that "waits" on God, believing firmly whatever comes to it from him is right; that walks straightforward on the path of life, with no backward glances at yesterday's stumbles and wanderings, — at peace with itself, at peace with God, willing to live, not afraid to die, — knows a happiness beyond the disturbing power of all the outward accidents and changes of life.

"Two hands upon the breast,
And labor's done·
Two pale feet crossed in rest,—
The race is won:
Two eyes with coin-weights shut,
And all tears cease:
Two lips, where grief is mute,
And wrath at peace."
So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot·
God, in his kindness, answereth not.

"Two hands to work addrest
Aye for his praise:
Two feet that never rest
Walking his ways:
Two eyes that look above
Still, through all tears:
Two lips that breathe but love,
Nevermore fears."
So cry we afterwards, low at our knees:
Pardon those erring prayers! Father, hear these!

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HOW SHALL I LIVE?

BY K. G. W.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
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HOW SHALL I LIVE?

YOU tell me you are *living;* and I tell you that you do not even know what *living* means, that the short word *life* covers more breadth and depth of meaning than you or I can fathom.

Life is the great gospel word. "In me," Christ said, "ye shall have life." What life? Not that life which you are leading, young man. You say, perhaps truly, that your moral character is good; that you seldom, if ever, swear; that you never gamble or drink; that, though you may not be able to give an exact account of your leisure hours, yet you are sure that in them you do no positive wrong. All this is negative. What do you *do?* not, What don't you do? How is it, for example, about your spiritual culture? You sleep late, and then you have no time for prayer or reading. Suppose you have only a few moments every day. One of the holiest men I ever knew, never read more than five or ten verses at once. Every verse had so

broad and many-sided a signification, that a few words gave him as much mental food as he could bear at one time. Throughout the day, they came upon him in all their various applications and shades of meaning, as circumstances placed him, now in one position, and now in another. Suppose you shall thus every day have a few Bible words fastened in your memory, like the face of a dear friend, and then breathe a short prayer, but a true one: on that day you will have really lived, at least for a few moments; and those few moments will broaden all your horizon.

Every temptation to scandal, to light gossip, to vulgarity, to little selfishnesses, when resisted, becomes a breath of real life taken into your soul. Every emotion of pure love for your mother or sister or wife is life; and every guilty thought is death to that life. Every personal comfort relinquished for others, every word or look of appreciation for the unheeded strivings and aspirations of others, is life.

Oh, reflect on what it is to live! You would like to excel. You would like to make progress. You would like to possess, what you never fail to honor, a true, manly life. Let me remind you of one method for attaining it.

In every doubtful moment, think of what Christ taught; or, if you fancy that you can find nothing

in the gospel applicable to your special momentary need, imagine what Christ would have done if he had been in your place. Take these words literally, and just try once or twice, and see if they do not help you: *Imagine what Christ would have done.* Bring him down into your counting-room, into your wearisome clerkship, into your sad or happy home, into your innocent and into your frivolous enjoyments, and think of him as on earth with you there. If you feel that he, more than all earthly friends, could comprehend your monotonous existence, that his presence would brighten your joys, or, if your actions are unworthy of his approval, that the mere thought of such a look as he gave to Peter, fastened upon you, would bring the blood to your forehead, and make you shiver to the inmost core of your heart, — if you can thus teach yourself to live and measure your actions by him, — he will be a nearer Saviour to you than you can now guess. He will be so near and dear, that he will seem like your brother, sending perpetually from heaven the memory of his life to aid you.

Then you will live in Christ, and insensibly will find you are living in God. What you do, you will do for him; your daily routine will be glorified, for your Father has given it to you; and, when it is well done, you will go up higher.

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BY

WILLIAM EVERETT.

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THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MANY Christians — for we cannot dare to call them any thing else; that is, men and women who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to attend Christian worship — are reluctant to partake of the Communion. They leave the church when the minister begins the Communion service; or they sit and see others partake, refusing the bread and wine themselves; or they stay away altogether on Communion Sundays.

Now we wish to remind all such of our Savior's simple request, "Do this in remembrance of me." There is no more doubt that Jesus of Nazareth said this, on the most solemn night of his life, to the followers who were to spread his doctrine, than of any event in public or private history. Whether he were man or God, a reformer or an impostor, he did make this dying request of his disciples.

We ask all who love him to imagine such a request made by a friend they have lived with on earth

We all know what a peculiarly intimate friendship we get by eating and drinking with a friend. It seems as if no acquaintance could become a friendship without it. Suppose, then, that such a friend asked you, when he left you, occasionally to eat a morsel and drink a drop in special memory of him, — it seems to me you would not fail to say, "Yes: we will." And you would see how much nearer and truer such a memorial was, than all the meditation and talk in the world. For we all must eat and drink; we die without it: and to consecrate this necessary, daily, homely, yet social and agreeable duty to a friend's memory, puts the seal on a holy attachment cherished even after death.

Such a feast it might slip your mind to prepare, in the press of other and newer cares. But if it were regularly prepared without trouble to yourself; a time and place appointed, when you were surely to be disengaged, and most probably at hand; prepared in a very simple, yet very tasteful way; and when, above all, the rest of the company were sure to be persons who shared your love, — can you invent any excuse for not presenting yourself, and remembering your friend's last request? In fact, no excuse can be offered; and it is sad to think, that what men would run to do for an earthly friend, they deliberately refuse for their heavenly friend, — positively leave the place, or stay and say "No," when his

bread and wine is offered. I have seen an ultra total-abstinence man touch a glass of wine to his lips rather than seem to offend a loved host; and yet I have seen scores of men and women sit through an entire Christian service, and refuse the Savior's cup.

The excuses that are generally offered seem indeed weak.

1st, *I am not good enough.* — There is nothing said about goodness in the Savior's request. One of those, at least, who partook of the Last Supper was bad enough, in all conscience; yet the Savior asked him with the rest. It is a first step to goodness, by cherishing an interest in him.

2d, *I have never joined any church.* — In our Unitarian churches, nay, in the Protestant-Episcopal Church of England and America, this is not required. In many churches, a special invitation is given to those who have never formally connected themselves with a church; and even where the request is differently worded, which is likely to give most offence to man and God, — quietly showing your love for Christ by partaking, or pointedly going out, or sitting still, and refusing?

3d, *I see no good in the service: I do not believe it exercises any useful influence.* — Can you see any harm in it? Can it, by any possibility, do harm? Some churches consider it mystical; but was ever

mystery presented so free from all that is shocking in its outward form? Some think it merely commemorative: was ever commemorative service more touching and delicate? If you enjoy Christian worship generally, — in prayer, hymn, reading, and discourse, — do you not have them all united by a bond of form at once perfectly homely and perfectly spiritual?

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Cambridge.

THE TRUE SAFETY.

BY J. C. LEARNED.

I THINK I understand how difficult it is for young persons to feel that concern for themselves which their friends feel for them. Those who have lived beyond the period of youth, who can look back over years enriched by experience and full of careful observation, and who are not unfamiliar with the power of temptation, or have struggled with it through many a bitter hour, — such are very likely to feel a solicitude for the welfare of the young which they, little knowing the dangers to which they are exposed, do not share. I know there is a vast deal of affectation in the world about this, as about all moral or religious matters. As a great many things are done only because it is thought very exemplary to do them, so a great many things are said because it is held to be exceedingly proper to say them. It is the custom of some always to be *advising* young people; and they think it the duty of all others to give *advice*, both in season and out of sea-

son, as though the young could be made perfect by much counsel and the mere word of precept.

My hearty sympathy, then, is with young people who don't want to be for ever advised, and least of all like to be advised by those who do it either from a love of fault-finding, or *simply as a matter of duty*, but who in their hearts many times really care very little for the welfare of the young, would make no sacrifices in their behalf, or certainly never trouble themselves to rise to a just appreciation of that class to which they address themselves.

But, on the other hand, the true lover of young people, seeking never to be arbitrary or obtrusive, would say the word in season; would speak to them as one of them, ready to make full recognition of every youthful quality, just allowance for youthful freedom and strength and buoyancy; saying not much, but well; manifesting that delicate consideration which carefully seeks not only the *right word* full of kindness, but the *right moment.*

There are cases, I know, where no human words, however wisely and discreetly given, avail any thing to save a young person from a life of sin and shame. Good example, kind treatment, the affections of nearest and dearest friends, the hope of honor, — all prove alike ineffectual to establish his self-respect and his integrity. Even those of us who are very

young are acquainted with instances of moral ruin so complete and striking, as to make the least reflective pause, and inquire how such things can be.

You all have seen the instance of a young man — now how changed from what he once was! — who started in life with the fairest prospects: surrounded by the most loving of friends, — a father who was proud of him, a mother who kept him ever in her heart, sisters whose welcome was brighter than the May mornings; furnished with every opportunity of improvement, good books, good schools, good society, — and yet at length growing indifferent to these, little by little disregarding the wishes of all who loved him best, little by little forsaking the purity and sobriety of that happy home. At first it was only getting "popular," and a little "fast," as we say, and so far a great many winked at what he did; and later still they said, "The boy is only sowing his wild oats now: he'll come out all right by and by." And the dear parents tried to think it was only a temporary ebullition of youthful spirits, which would soon be over; that, when life began in earnest, their son, like many another, would settle down into steady habits, and be as respectable as they: and yet were doomed to disappointment. Somehow the sins of his youth clung to him. Somehow he was ever returning to his "indiscretions." The habits of his

earlier life bound him, and grew upon him, rather than lessened in their power over him. And now we and all men behold in him only a poor, miserable wreck of humanity. He can do little or nothing to serve others, for he is not the master of himself. His life is a wretched and pitiful failure. All the hopes that blossomed with it are blighted. His character appears before all men broken and irreparable, a barren waste, a moral ruin. I say we have seen such instances, and do see them; the youngest of us know of them. They are facts — stubborn, terrible facts — that cannot be kept out of sight. And it is such facts as these which seem almost unaccountable, incredible, that make parents watchful and anxious for the welfare of their children. For they see that life is a solemn and fearful experiment; and this ought to make young people watchful over themselves.

I oftentimes think how little a boy, who goes for the first time from beneath the shelter of his home, realizes the tenderness and love that he takes with him, that attend his every step. The father pauses in the midst of his business to give a thought to his absent boy. The mother's heart swells with fondness as she sits and sews or reads in her accustomed seat, seeing his fair face between the stitches or between the lines. There is no day that his name is

not mentioned in the household; they think of him at meals, seeing his vacant seat at the table; they miss him at the evening devotion; they miss his voice in the song, his footstep in the hall; but, when the "good-nights" are said, they whisper one in their hearts for the dear one who is absent, committing him to God for protection and guidance. They think often of the snares, pitfalls, and temptations that lie in wait, and into which even their beloved may fall; and they pray, with an earnestness that only a parent knows, that he may be kept from evil, that he may be strong in the right, that he may love honorable things, truth, purity, virtue, — coming safe through the dangers that beset the young and inexperienced heart.

How many of you, my young friends, feel that you respond as nobly and fully and heartily as you might to this love and thoughtfulness and solicitude? I cannot believe, that any of you would deliberately, or even willingly, cause a pain to enter your mother's heart, or wound your father's sense of honor; and yet are you as watchful over yourselves as you ought to be? Do you seek, every day that you live, to make your character more perfect and comely, more strong and manly and true, building only upon the corner-stone of eternal right? Have you thought of the anguish that bows a parent to the earth,

when first he finds he has a reckless and unfaithful child? — a life-long anguish, yea, and which we know not that even the grave can cover.

The first departures from right are usually very small; in themselves, comparatively harmless. But, when one step is taken, it is as though the boundaries that separate us from all conceivable evil were passed: when the fences are down, the whole broad field is before us, and there is no longer any hindrance. It is also as when we enter upon a bottomless morass; unless *at once* we withdraw upon firm ground, we sink deeper and deeper down, till at length every effort to extricate ourselves only makes our condition more hopeless. Every one's character is in his own hands: he is either throwing it away, losing it for ever, or he is building it up into beautiful proportions, confirming it in all good principles, adorning it with divine graces, making it a power for noble work in the world. It is an old adage, that "the child is father to the man." I believe it is a true one. I look around among the acquaintances of my earlier years, and I see that those who were unprincipled as boys are generally unprincipled as men. What likelihood is there that a filthy, foul-mouthed, dissipated, or mean-spirited youth will make a temperate, pure-hearted, generous, exemplary man? If you do not hate these things now, I am

not sure that you ever will. Whoever has fallen into these habits must make a desperate effort to change, or it will never be; and the longer he waits, the less will he be inclined to make the necessary exertion. Too seldom is the effort ever made, or it is too feeble to succeed, the will being both weak and treacherous; and the man sinks lower year by year, losing by degrees all self-respect, all manliness, all sense of honor and of shame.

Crime in these days is common; and we see that it is not committed by men of mean birth and poor education alone. It takes its seat in high places as well as in low. We find young men fitted for it, participating in it, in all conditions of life. Who can be trusted? None, surely, except those who set their faces as flint against wrong beginnings. Who among you has been tempted, even in small ways? Did you yield? who, then, is in danger? Be warned in time!

Are you one who does not trouble himself about the right and wrong of things? Can you do a mean thing, and quiet your conscience? Would you lie or cheat for a consideration? Do you have a suspicion, that all this talk about virtue and morality and religion is for women and parsons and church-members and weak-minded people? Can you touch pitch, and not be defiled; or take burning coals with-

in your bosom, and not be burned? Are you so superhumanly strong where others have proved themselves so weak? There is no lane so long that it has no turn. Little by little, one goes down that slippery bank, where an irresistible stream runs swift and deep. You have seen a fly get into a spider's web, first only a foot or a wing, and it did not trouble itself much to escape; just then the spider came out, and with new gossamer meshes caught up another foot or another wing, and wove the threads back and forth, so deftly fastening a little here and a little there, that flutter the fly never so noisily now, all its efforts but made its conditions worse. It is just so if a man allows himself to enter upon the domain of the Devil. Give your hand, and he binds you hand and foot. Unless you stand up stoutly against every purpose of his, resisting every offer, before you are aware, he will have you enlisted for life in his service.

The young man is safe if he is pledged to purity and right; not otherwise. If he is willing deliberately to violate a single principle of duty for any cause whatever, he is not safe; nor can the prayers of those who love him best, nor of us all, make him so. The young man who has not principle, who has not integrity, who has not a sense of honor, which make him firm and true in the presence of temptations,

whether small or great, immovable alike against all wicked opposition or evil persuasion, — is not safe. It matters not whether his birth be high or low, in wealth or poverty ; he must have noble purposes, and a life of honor and usefulness before him as his great aim, or he will disappoint his friends, dishonor his own name, and hinder the progress of human society. A life of real virtue, of nobleness, of true greatness, is not by accident. It comes, if it come at all, from lofty aspirations, from incorruptible motives, long cherished, and held sacred as life itself. Have these, and you are safe. Have these, and those who love you will find their prayers answered and their joy full. Have these, and men shall be unable to withhold their praise of your memory when your life is over, and God himself shall approve and bless you.

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ACROSS LOTS.

BY

REV. E. E. HALE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

BOSTON.

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ACROSS LOTS.

BY REV. E. E. HALE.

THE *way* of transgressors is hard. The *way* is hard. People try to persuade themselves that they can make the *way* easy; that it is only the punishment that is hard, or something that will come in at the end. There is a theory that the station you come out at will be an uncomfortable station, but that the sleeping-cars of this transgressors' railway are all splendid palaces, and that the day-cars are the saloons of luxury. It is no such thing, in reality, except in the agents' advertisement. When you come to try this railway, you find, as you do on all railways, that, for the comfort of the thing, you would rather be in your own hovel than in what they call a palace car; and that all the velvet plush of the seats, and all the painting of the ceiling, will not keep one cinder from your eye. The *way* of the transgressors is hard; and all the gilding in the world does not make it easy

TWO CLASSES OF CRITICS DOUBT THE TEXT.

It becomes necessary to say this, for two reasons. First, the transgressors themselves are hoping to have a smooth way as they ride, and expecting that some new combination can be made, just before they come to the end, so that they can then switch off the track, and escape the disagreeable station which they suppose the way may come out at. When men asked Louis XV. where he supposed his way of governing France would come out, he said, "After us the deluge," — a remark which proved very true. But, when they asked him why he kept on as he did with that deluge before him, he said, "Oh! the thing will last through our time." Now, such is the exact effort of all transgressors to persuade themselves that their way will answer their purposes as well as any they can find, or, indeed, as any way there is. They will grant for argument's sake, or for quiet's sake, that the consequences may be very bad. But they say the consequences are in the future, and they will look out for the present.

Second, I do not think their delusion would be so difficult to handle, if it were not that a large body of religionists come in, on their side, with just the same hallucination. Half the written theology of the world tells you that sin is very delightful; that it is as agreeable as it is easy. It acknowledges this

almost with satisfaction, by way of contrasting the awful punishment which is going to come, the very hot hell which is going to follow this cool, lazy, happy life of wickedness. And so it happens, that the theologians, on their other side of the table, really make themselves the partners of the transgressors, and play across the table into their hands. Both of them agree to say that the way of transgressors is pleasant and delightful, — on the whole, the most pleasant and most delightful; for really the theological books get so far as to make out that a religious life is pretty sure to be an uncomfortable, sour, and unhappy life, and that the face of a religious person is not a cheerful face. Of course, if all this were true, it must be said, whatever the consequence. But, as it is all false, the saying it is a great injury; for the saying it unquestionably confirms the passion to run on in the present, even in the transgressors' way, and to take some happy chance to spring off the train just before it comes at its journey's end. Now, as it happens, the theory is not true. The *way* of transgressors is hard, in the sense that it is itself disappointing, provoking, more and more unsatisfactory all the time, and that, as one goes on, it becomes worse and worse for him. The word "hard" is not used in opposition to "easy." Easy enough it is, as we all know. But it is used, as always when a road is spoken of,

in opposition to "smooth," or to "successful." It is a jolting road, — a road with breaks and jars and failures all the way. The switches are wrong; the track is bad; there are snake-heads coming up through the bottom of the car, just when least is expected. As this is so, — and as the worst transgressors are an authority for saying it is so, — the theologians make a double mistake in implying that it is not so; and, as I said, they so far aid and comfort the transgressors whom they are opposing. For almost all people believe much more in the present than they do in any distant future, and think that one bird in the hand is worth a flock of birds in the forest or in any distant aviary, or even in the heavens above them.

For these two reasons, I say, does it become more necessary to repeat, with every variety of illustrations, that the *way* of the transgressors is hard. This truth may be illustrated, not in Scriptures only or in texts like this, but in the whole experience of history. It is a certain statement, springing from the nature of passion and the invisible laws of life.

A CROSS WAY IS A HARD WAY.

This is, indeed, one of those cases where the old derivation or etymology of the words is still a guide as to the truth which they convey. A transgressor

is one who goes across the ways and boundaries which God has appointed. The word is a Latin word, which expresses the same idea as our English word "tres-passer." The transgressor or trespasser is a man with a passion for short cuts; constantly flattering himself that he sees better paths for his purposes than God's paths, better ways than God's ways. Leaving God's ways, therefore, to try his own experiments, he is engaged at once in stepping over and into other people's furrows; he loses time and patience at brooks, where he walks up and down in soggy meadows, trying to find easy places to jump across, because there is no bridge; he misses his spring when the jumping moment comes, because the tuft of grass is insecure from which he leaps; he wades out upon the mud on his hands and feet, recovering from his fall as well as he may; and yet he must plunge on in this same cross-cut of his own surveying, partly from a pride which will not give up, partly from a mistaken feeling that it will be just as hard to go back over a route which has proved so unsatisfactory. The whole difficulty, perhaps, is expressed in the syllable *trans* of "transgressor," or in the *tres* of "trespasser," which mean alike cross or across. The transgressor at his own pleasure cuts *across* all boundaries, even those of God's own way. He becomes, therefore, what we call a "cross" man. He thinks, perhaps, that

this is because every thing in nature crosses his wishes and plans. But it is because he has undertaken to cross the plans and wishes of the God of nature. And this is the reason why a cross man is not successful, and is not happy. He acknowledges that he is not. He is growling about it all the time. He is an illustration, in the very etymology of his name, that the way of the *trans*gressor is hard; that the *way itself* is quite as hard as the bed which he is to sleep upon when he comes to his journey's end.

ISABEL OF SIDON.

I do not know that the illustration of this from history is any more striking than the illustrations our own lives would furnish. But life or history is full of illustration. Take the life of the beautiful Isabel of Sidon, — the proud, seductive, all-controlling Eastern queen. If any one has a right to choose her own way, she has. If any one has a right to cut athwart the arrangements which the world pronounces right, and which it believes its God has ordered, it is such a woman. For, if any one has power of her own, it is she. She is not merely the daughter of a king; she is not merely the wife of a king; she is not merely the mother of a king. She is more than this. She is a resolute woman, with a will of her own, which dares

every thing, and therefore, if human pride may claim it, can win every thing. More yet, she is beautiful as she is brave. And she is not afraid to try. She is born of a cruel, fanatic, determined race; and she inherits its force and decision. She marries a weak husband, fond of luxury, fond of peace. Because he is fond of peace, he has married the daughter of his strongest neighbor. Because he is fond of luxury, he is willing to introduce at his court all the magnificence of her father's. She travels in pomp to her new home, and takes with her a thousand ecclesiastics, — priests and preachers, — who are to sustain the gorgeous ritual to which she is used since her childhood. Whoever insults one of these insults her. Whoever insults her pays penalty with his life. Her husband, like Macbeth, is slow to take on himself the prompt murders and attendant crimes of her ambition. Little she recks; she will use his signet, she will give his orders, she will herself send her own enemies out of her way. He comes home one day, complaining, like David, that he cannot obtain such a piece of land to add to the palace grounds. "Are you king, or not?" says the proud woman. And she herself writes the false accusation of the unhappy land-owner; she charges him falsely with blasphemy, punishable by death; she fixes the king's seal to the accusation; and, when the poor wretch is killed, *she* comes in triumph

to the king, who had just a shade of conscience she bids him take the coveted garden for his own. Meanwhile, through his life and after his death, she makes her own name notorious by her shameless adulteries. A thousand years after, the latest Christian prophet, wishing to heap the lowest shame upon a community, does it in borrowing her name. And to this hour the meanest drunkard, wishing to abuse the scold who has sunk lower than himself, takes that same name to revile her. Even the innocent child lisping its catechism, and asked who is the worst woman who ever lived, answers, "JEZEBEL."

Take such a transgressor as she, — a transgressor, all whose ways were made as easy as rank and gold and a woman's will could make them; as easy to the last as triumph could make them. I say nothing of the close of that life. I say nothing of the result to which those ways led her. I speak of the *ways* themselves. Is it not, on any conception of the story, clear, that they must have been hard ways all along? These devilish intrigues, these murders of the innocent, this scorn for her husband, this shifting of her lovers, these state-craft ingenuities; even the pride of place, even the pomp of retinue, even the low, sensual enjoyment of the table, which is the enjoyment she shares with the pig, or the condor, or the boa constrictor, — is there, in such a life of fierce passion, of steady transgression, is there any hope,

even for enjoyment, in it all? It is clear that, in the meanest hovel on the plain of Esdrael, the simplest woman who loved her husband and her children, and tried not to cross over the ways her God had appointed, found more in life than did the queen. That woman lived more, carried out her own real wishes more, succeeded more, even enjoyed more, her ways were more smooth, her journey more successful, than the most triumphant ways of the crowned transgressor.

HEROD THE GREAT.

Take another instance where the transgression is unmixed ambition, where it is not so mixed up with sensual indulgence as is Jezebel's. Take the *man* whom some of you would call the worst man described in the Bible, — the Herod who killed the infants in Bethlehem. Here is a sagacious man, a brave man, an admirable administrator, and one who out-intrigued the best intriguers of his day, — more than a match for Cleopatra, or Anthony, or Augustus. He stops at nothing. There is no bar he cannot spring over. Transgressor, indeed! Appointed king, he had to storm the defences of his own capital, Jerusalem, so unpopular was he with the people. Very well, — he stormed them! The city taken, he deals with the Jewish council, the Sanhedrim. All but two had been opposed to him. So all but two

are killed. The high-priest seems to be in opposition. He assassinates the high-priest. He is left at last without an enemy who dares show himself. He is at the height of prosperity and success. He loves, perhaps, no one but his wife; and he worships her. So his mother and his sister accuse her of falseness; and he, mad with jealousy, kills her. So with all who follow her. He marries whom he will, divorces whom he will, kills whom he will. Two sons she leaves him, noble young men, loved by everybody, even by him. So distinguished are they, that they win the jealousy of his brother and sister. In an Eastern Court, it is easy to accuse; and the father, convinced too readily of their guilt, tries them, and executes them. It is then that he falls into his last sickness. In that sickness, hearing something said of a king born in Bethlehem, he gives orders that every infant in Bethlehem shall be killed, though in its mother's arms. Getting orders from Rome that he may do his will with his son Antipater, he orders him executed, and then he dies. That is Herod the Great, — a successful transgressor, if to succeed is always to have one's own way.

Now, I do not ask whether his conscience smote him or not. I have no idea that, when Herod's life ended, he had much conscience left him. I have nothing to say about remorse. I do not see that remorse plays a large part in such lives; though I

know that when it does cut, it cuts deep. I only ask, if this way of his, which was his own way, seems to anybody a smooth way, a simple way, a way which would attract or seduce one, even if he could keep out of sight its end. Is it not from the very beginning a hard way? Is it not clear that one of these murders compelled another? Is it not clear that this passionate ferocity grew with what it fed upon? We are pleased to say, that, in the close of his life, Herod was insane. We say the same thing of Nero, of Claudius, of Caligula. I suppose it is true. But what does that word "insane" mean in such lives but this? — that where a man is cursed by the opportunity to transgress indefinitely, where he can gratify all his passions, — or, as we say, can have all his own way, — that then the brain gives way as every other organ fails, that he cannot think any more accurately than he can walk, or than he can strike. Passion destroys manhood. That is what we mean when we say he has gone mad. Or, in the language of the text, we mean that the way of the transgressor is hard.

PASSION IS LAW-LESS.

To say that it is hard for a locomotive engine to leave its track, and run across, — or, in Latin, to transgress, — where no track has been made for it, seems clear enough. To say that it is hard for a child

of God to leave the way of that God, the way of his own divine nature, and try to adapt himself to the ways of hyenas, or of foxes, or of the swine, seems as clear. Do not let us satisfy ourselves with looking at some future result of such transgression, — such abandonment of the divine way. No! We rack the engine itself: we twist it, and begin its ruin, the moment the transgression begins. "A short life and a merry one" is the motto of the fool, who is too proud to keep his carriage upon the highway which wiser men have travelled. But the life is not merry. Merriment requires balance, ease, comfort, and some measure of success. Passion indulged in leaves no balance, no ease, no comfort, and insures failure. Passion of its nature is law-less. It defies God's law. It defies all law. You might as well expect, therefore, that a pebble from the beach should fit in with the carved edges of the mosaic of a breastpin, as that a life of passion should at any edge fit in with any other life. Two passionate natures, uncontrolled, sometimes touch for an instant. But then they fly apart, like the sides of a bursting shell. The way of each is hard, and it is a way which must be travelled alone. It is hard, because it is the way of passion. This is not simply because God is displeased. It is not simply because men and angels are sorry. It is that the fool who shoots off the road, who trans-gresses, or goes cross ways, is dissatis-

fied with himself. He is dissatisfied with the taste of his own liquor, dissatisfied with the kiss of his purchased paramour, dissatisfied with the gold which he rakes from the gambling table: he is disgusted with the steady ebbing and failing of his own powers. As for future punishment of transgression, he knows as little of that as ever. But the way of the transgressor is hard now; and he knows that, as he rides upon it.

THE SAVIOUR'S STATEMENT.

In the face of half the theologians, we are to observe that this is the view steadily of the New Testament. The New Testament knows little of that scheme of a certain future punishment, to be gained or lost in accordance with certain provisions. Jesus is called a Saviour because he saves people from their sins, not from the consequences of their sins. The kingdom of his heaven is at hand, not at a distance. To those to whom he gives it, he gives it now, not in the future. The sons of man, the daughters of man, are, in his view, God's immortal children, detailed here for such part of God's service as on this earth can be carried through. Do they transgress? Do they break bounds? Do they disobey? Do they insist on wasting the period of their service here, in blunting their weapons, in straining and twisting their bodies, in imitating beasts? Such gar-

rison follies destroy those who commit them. They become mean by degrees, and miserably less. Little need, indeed, of pictures of future punishment to terrify them from such folly. The folly is its own punishment, as, from day to day, their lives ebb out of them. Placed here to grow strong, they do grow weak. Placed here to succeed, they find failure every hour. Little matter, indeed, for them, when they leave God's road, and for themselves hew out a new one, to ask whether this track will be cut short by bog or by jungle or by pitfall or by ocean. Little matter now; for while they are hacking at it, and wading and staggering and falling, it is clear enough that the way of the transgressor is hard to-day.

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EVIL-SPEAKING.

BY

REV. H. G. SPAULDING.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
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EVIL-SPEAKING.

BY REV. H. G. SPAULDING.

"IF any man," says St. James, "seem to be religious, and *bridleth not* [doth not put the *bit* on] *his tongue*, this man's religion is vain." It is evident that the apostle of "good works," who has left us an epistle brimful of wholesome, practical truths, knew just what he was writing about when he compared a man's mouth to that of a horse; when he said that a man's religion is good for nothing, unless it leads him to do with himself exactly what he does with his horse, — put a bit on his tongue; and so tame and keep in subjection this most noble and useful, but often most unruly and mischievous, member of the body.

We shall get nearer the heart of the matter by considering what this gift of the tongue is, whose use so blesses, and whose abuse so curses, man. It is nothing less than the gift of a faculty which distinguishes man from all other animals. He is the speaking animal, and, whether he came from ape or Adam,

he is what he is because to him alone the faculty of speech has been given, by him alone has language been invented and its civilizing agency felt. Of the two legends of the creation in the Book of Genesis, the second only gives us a picture of human life. In the first story, the silent pair, who simply hear the divine command, but give no answering word of human speech, are merely a couple of finer animals, with comelier shape and fairer features than the rest. But, in the second narrative, Jehovah brings the beasts and the fowls to man, "to see what he would call them;" and thus with the speaking Adam Eden becomes the abode of man, and human history begins.

See how the old Hebrew legend is repeated in every household to-day, when in the Eden of home a new life begins. How the young creature, who has in his own little way a sort of Adam-like dominion over every thing around him, is eagerly watched, that his first intelligible speech may be caught! And what a joy is born into the house when a single syllable breaks, in sweet, stammering utterance, from the infant's lips! Or if this faculty divine lies dormant, and the little lord of the nursery continues his speechless reign, how painful at length the silence becomes; and how the mother yearns for the time when those sealed lips shall be opened, when she

shall speak with her child, and the rippling melody of his words wake the music that is now hidden in her heart!

If such be the worth of language in its first feeble beginning, who can estimate its value when, through lips inspired, it gains dominion over the human mind, sways the emotions and rules the passions of the heart, and bends even the destiny of nations by its mighty power? Thanks to the great Giver of all good for this divinest gift of speech, — the handmaid of reason, servant of thought, affection's ready messenger, bearer of hope and comfort and consolation, inspirer, quickener, mover of the world. What folly so inexcusable as thoughtlessly to abuse so noble a faculty? What sin so great as purposely to misuse it, — to turn its sweet waters into the foul, muddy streams of falsehood and slander? Surely it is no light offence thus to pervert God's noblest gift, and human responsibility is nowhere so clearly set forth as in that solemn warning of Jesus, that "for every idle word men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment."

The sources of evil-speaking are not hard to find. Not a few of our idle words come from sheer thoughtlessness. Profanity is quite as often the sign of a careless, unthinking habit of speech, as of wilful purpose. This is not the slightest excuse for such

an offence. Thoughtlessly to take the holiest names on irreverent lips cannot be lightly regarded by any right-thinking man. The settled habit of profane speech, whatever the words be that are spoken, inevitably re-acts upon the mind, lets in defilement to the inward parts, destroys the healthy tone of moral character, and unfits the soul for converse with high and heavenly things.

But a kind of evil-speaking, sometimes thoughtless, often malicious, which is far more degrading, as it is more blamable, than profane speech, is *gossip*, that idle tattling of other men's affairs, which breeds incurable mischief in every community. To prove this, I only need refer to the utter contempt which is universally felt for that obnoxious character, a busybody: or call to mind the disgrace which, in our school days, every tell-tale most justly incurred. Not only are these gossips of the school, and of the larger school we call society, mischievous in the extreme, setting people at variance with one another, stirring up ill-feeling, and loosening all those bonds of charity that alone hold human beings together: they have also in their own character fallen below the dignity of true manhood or womanhood.

The very excuses which are sometimes urged in palliation of the offence show, through their thin disguises, how utterly inexcusable it is. Can any seri-

ous man or woman give a feather's weight to the half-jesting apology, that people, especially in the country, have to talk about their neighbors, so little else is there for them to talk about? Shame on that man's or that woman's religion which does not suggest enough, and more than enough, of occupation in helping to bear others' burdens in life; that leaves any time for the service of that master who never fails to put mischief upon idle tongues, as well as into idle hands. Better imitate the cow-boy, who "whistles as he goes, for want of thought," than fill up God's precious gift of time with idle words, that degrade one's own soul, and rankle like poisonous arrows in a neighbor's heart.

Allow, too, that society has a right to protect itself against bad men, and that to discuss the characters of our neighbors is needful in order that we may know by whom we are surrounded. If gossip only were a fair discussion, whose sole end is truth, whose single motive love, this would be right and well. But how easily envy and malice, ill-will and jealousy, and a whole brood of baser feelings, crowd out all better motives, and give the tone and bias to our remarks! Who does not know that the purest character is most easily defiled in the turbid current of gossip; even as the whitest lily is most easily smirched in a filthy stream? Bate no jot of hatred

of all wrong-doing; but first be sure the wrong has been done. Bring Christian conduct up to the standard of pagan law at least, and count every man innocent until he is found guilty. Yes: go then a step higher, to that charity which "thinketh no evil," that "believeth all things" for the best and to the advantage of one's neighbor, that covereth a multitude of real defects, and abstaineth still more from divulging false and imaginary scandals.

But the worst form of evil speaking is *slander*. A good deal of that idle talk about our neighbors which so few of us wholly abstain from, runs very close upon this vice of slandering. We may, indeed, stop far short of open defamation of the character of another, and yet, judged by the spirit of our words and the temper of our hearts, have been guilty of the self-same crime. Giving currency to unfounded reports, repeating unproved insinuations, the —

> "Pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
> As, *Well, well, we know*. . . . .
> Or such ambiguous giving-out"—

all this is slander in the germ; and, before we are aware, will spring up into a poisonous growth of calumny and detraction. The seed of slander is our idle gossip; and whoever, in any community, does aught to foster and encourage this foolish tattling of other men's actions, this intrusive meddling with

other men's affairs, helps to make slandering an easy vice. How few, even of those whose intention is the farthest possible from wronging a fellow-creature, think as they ought of the extent of the injury they are thus unconsciously inflicting. Consider only a single result which follows directly from every slanderous report, — the pain it causes the slandered party; a pain that is often keenest when most undeserved. Suppose, to make clear the nature of this injury, some successful man of business, retiring from active commercial pursuits, comes into a quiet New-England village to reside, to make for himself a home in some favored spot, where, in the words of the old hymn, —

"Every prospect pleases"—

(alas! must we add), —

"And only man is vile"?

Suppose, I say, such a man comes to such a place to live. He brings thither not only his household goods, but lays in the village graveyard his dearest possessions, that the dust of his departed ones may mingle with the hallowed soil that holds his neighbors' buried treasures. He comes to add another to those noble, hospitable homes that are the fairest ornaments of any town, and to be himself a coworker with all public-spirited citizens, in making a

more attractive place of residence, a more enterprising, more intelligent, and more Christian community. Suppose, now, that against such a man the venomous fangs of this snake-in-the-grass, gossip, and these slanderous accusings of idle or malicious tongues, are suddenly turned; that before he has had the time or the opportunity to justify, save to a few intimate friends, the honorable reputation he has elsewhere earned, these worse than thieves seek to filch from him his good name, —

"The immediate jewel of his soul."

Can any words depict the anguish that such false accusing gives, — the sad feeling that comes up unbidden in the heart at the thought of such a shadow cast before one's path, and covering, too, in its blighting folds those who are most near and dear to his affections? True it is that, conscious of his own integrity, a man may rise superior to any slander, however gross its charges may be. But there are few kinds of suffering that are harder to bear than the pain that springs involuntarily from the thought of one's fair name stolen by a sacrilegious hand; and the tenderest heart, the conscience most responsive to all that is pure and noble, always grieves most deeply when thus wounded in its finest sensibilities. Let the one who thus basely counterfeits

the currency of human reputation, suffer the extremest penalty of the statute-book. But let no man think to escape condemnation, if, by his unthinking habit of passing such fraudulent issues, his careless repeating of idle tales, his too indulgent listening to groundless accusations, he has countenanced and encouraged this growing vice of slander. "In this," says a quaint old preacher, "there is not much difference between the great devil that frameth scandalous reports, and the little imps that run about and disperse them."

What, then, is the remedy for this evil? I know of but one. As that is justly called a vain and worthless religion which does not put the bit on the tongue, so the needful check and guidance for our speech must be true and undefiled religion. Our only sure rock of defence against evil-speaking is a firm, Christian character. In the age of chivalry, when high-minded conduct and noble deeds were counted as the mark of true manhood, King Arthur, so we read, having drawn together the knighthood-errant of his realm and all the realms in that fair order of the Round Table, made them lay their hands in his, and swear —

> "To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
> To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
> *To speak no slander, — no! nor listen to it*

Those days of chivalry are indeed departed. But that pure religion taught and lived by Jesus Christ binds every disciple of his, by a still more sacred vow, —

"To speak no slander, — no! nor listen to it."

By the side of a true Christian character, grounded on the everlasting foundation of charity, all professions of belief are but houses on the sand, that will fail and fall away. We may say, "Lord, Lord," with never so much humbleness of piety; but, if we have not sought to do the plainly revealed will of God, it will be all in vain. We may offer our daily petition, that we be not "led into temptation;" but what will our prayer avail if we wilfully expose ourselves all the day long to the seductive temptation of idle talk and uncharitable gossip? We may ask to be forgiven for our trespasses; but how can we expect forgiveness for our own actual faults, when we are so ready to cast upon our fellows the shadow of unproved and even imaginary sins? May we strive, with God's help, to keep our hearts with all diligence, that we may speak only those words that are well-pleasing in his sight, — "with malice towards none, with perfect charity towards all mankind."

Fifth Series.] [No. 22.

WHAT WILL HE PREACH ABOUT?

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON

University Press: John Wilson & Son,
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WHAT WILL HE PREACH ABOUT?

IT is proposed to hold services in this town, to be conducted by a Unitarian minister, — one commissioned and encouraged by the American Unitarian Association.

Will you come and hear him?

Why, no. I never heard a Unitarian in my life. What will he preach about?

That I cannot tell you in so many words. Unitarians do not consider themselves tied down, like the ministers of many denominations, to preach only a limited range of doctrines, in set language. They allow the free range over all subjects on which religion may shed its light. But thus much I think I can promise: —

1. He will preach about *God*, the one living and true God, — our Father, to whom Jesus Christ taught his disciples to pray. His power, his wisdom, and his goodness will enter largely into his discourse. Our absolute dependence on him, and accountability to him, will be dwelt on as thoroughly

as in any orthodox sermon. And, above all, he will insist on his Fatherhood; his paternal love to all his children. Any theology, any doctrine, which tries to cramp God in the exercise of fatherly affection, and to make man or woman any thing less than a son or a daughter to him, will be wholly rejected.

2. He will preach about *duty*. He will insist on our obligations to God, as being, in fact, the duties of children to a father; that at every hour of our lives, not merely in a moment of religious ecstasy, we are bound to service and worship, with heart and hand. He will tell you that you must advance God's kingdom, not merely by prayer, but by work; and in all probability his sermon will be, in large measure, on the ways of working for God's kingdom in this age of the world.

3. He will put first and foremost in these duties to God, *Love*, — love to him and to all mankind. God is our Father; hence all men are our brothers, hence love is due from us to both God and man. Every thing inconsistent with love he will disown; every thing resulting from a pure holy love he will accept as a part of his religion. Education, almsgiving, visiting the sick and suffering, — every act that is dictated by love he will advocate; and he will preach strongly on the need of so going about all these good works, that tender, God-like love, no stern, chilling idea of duty, shall breathe from every step of the way.

Let me interrupt you. I am not so much afraid of what he will preach about, as what he will not preach about. I fear he will omit some things without which no preaching could seem to me to breathe God's spirit.

That is a fair objection, though perhaps prejudice leads you to insist on some inessentials. What points do you mean?

I am afraid he will not preach about our divine Redeemer, Christ, or about the sinfulness of man's nature, and the necessity of an infinite atonement.

In answer to these objections, I presume to anticipate that, —

1. He certainly will preach about Christ. What particular view of his position in the universe he will take, I cannot say. All Unitarians agree in rejecting the notion that Christ is or can be the Supreme God; and very possibly this preacher will spend some time in showing that the doctrine of the Trinity has no good Scripture warrant. As yet, the Unitarian body does not seek to confine its members to any dogmatical expression of views of Jesus of Nazareth. But this they do believe, and this he will say, — that Jesus is the perfect example for humanity; a moral teacher, unequalled and unapproachable for the absolute and universal nature of his precepts; an incarnation of divine love and strength; the great Captain of all who seek to fight in God's

army; and the mighty King whose rule in men's hearts has conquered, and is conquering, the kingdoms of the world for God.

2. So with your next objection. The Unitarian preacher will unquestionably rebuke sin of every kind; he will dwell on the imperfections, the errors, the weaknesses, the crimes of humanity. He will not spare those who think that a single moment of religious ecstasy, of assent to a creed, of conversion, as they call it, changes the whole nature, once and for all eternity, from a fiend to a saint. At the same time, he will combat very strongly the doctrine that man is incapable of right and virtue till this moment of conversion has come. He will point to the words of Jesus, which speak together of the just and the unjust, the good and the evil. In short, he will treat sin as an incident of humanity, and not its essence.

3. Now, for the necessity of an infinite atonement. He will admit, that, as all men frequently sin, all men need forgiveness; and that this forgiveness of God is revealed to man by Christ, he will probably make emphatic. But that this forgiveness must be bought, instead of being given freely; that God's mercy is really not mercy at all, but justice satisfied; that justice can be satisfied by punishing the innocent, and letting go the guilty; and that for a finite sin, by an arbitrary process of choice, man can be subject to an infinite punishment, — all these doc-

trines he will utterly condemn, as alien from God's fatherly love, and from all natural or revealed notions of justice.

This is very strange. It is not what I have been taught to think Christian preaching; and yet you say —

I say no more except just this, —
Will you go and hear him?

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THE OILED FEATHER

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

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(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

"THE OILED FEATHER."

CHAPTER I.

IN the village of ——— lived two neighbors named Joseph Irons and Samuel Parsons. Joseph Irons went by the name of "Rusty Joe," and Samuel Parsons by that of "Polished Sam." The names were characteristic of the men, — Joseph Irons being a short, tart kind of man in his dealings with his fellow-creatures; and Samuel Parsons being, on the other hand, genial and civil. Joseph Irons wouldn't put his hand to his hat for any man, not he! he wouldn't waste his time with palavering people with fine words, no, not he! if folk didn't like his goods, they may leave them; and if they didn't like his answers, they needn't ask him any questions; in a word, "Rusty Joe," though very honest, and very decent living, was disliked by almost everybody, and, in truth, no one could be surprised.

On the other hand, Samuel Parsons was a general favorite; he had a salute for every one that came in the way; he didn't think himself a bit the worse man because he put his hand to his hat to the

parson and the squire, as well as bobbed his head to the old apple-woman at the corner of the street. As to civil words, Sam's theory was, that they were quite as little trouble to speak as gruff ones; and they certainly slipped more pleasant-like out of one's mouth; and so it came to pass, that everybody liked Sam Parsons, and we may wind up this paragraph, just as we did the last, by saying, and, in truth, no one could be surprised.

"Polished Sam" and "Rusty Joe" might have lived on to the end of the world, for aught that we have to do with them, were it not that they afford us some very useful lessons, which will teach us, if we learn them, how to avoid a great deal of unpleasantness, in this rusty crusty world of ours. The world is full of Rusty Joes, and Rusty Joes' wives, too, and folk make no small part of their own misery by bumping and thumping against one another, when the road is wide enough for all; and by being grumpy and growly when a wee bit of civility would answer the purpose quite as well. Folk should remember the great mechanical law, that "action and reaction are equal and contrary;" that is, put into plain words: if you throw a ball against a wall, the wall will hit the ball as hard as the ball hits the wall. only in an opposite direction. Or if you like to put it into the language of daily life, it will read thus "If you thump me, I'll thump you; and moreover I'll thump you as hard as you thump me." Of

course, we consider this an un-Christian way of going through life; all we say is, that it is a very common one.

Well, we will see how "Rusty Joe" and "Polished Sam" got through one day of their existence; one day will be quite enough for such a little book as this.

"Come, bring the oil flask, there's a pet," said Samuel Parsons to his wife, as he finished screwing on a new lock on his front door. Sam, of course, needn't have said, "there's a pet," unless he liked; but he used to think it was a great shame that women were called all sorts of pretty names before they were married, but none afterwards. "I say," says Sam, "many of the poor creatures are cheated with them there pretty names: poor folk! they think they'll always get them; but they become mighty scarce after they finger the ring." We don't mean to tell all the names Sam called his wife, before they were married, but now he called her pet; and as soon as she heard the loving word, she threw down her duster on the chair, and sped off to the kitchen for the flask. The flask had a feather in it, as such flasks generally have; and Sam, taking the said feather between his forefinger and thumb, oiled the key of the street door right well, and then locked it and unlocked it a dozen times. At first it went stiff and required some strength of wrist to turn it; but as it was worked to and fro, and the oil began to

make its way into the wards, it worked more and more easily, until at last Tommy, Sam's little son, who was standing by, was able to turn it almost with a touch, and then Sam pronounced that it would do.

This operation finished, Sam thought he'd just give his knife a touch of the end of the feather; less than a drop out of the flask would do; just a mere touch, that was all it wanted; and presently, to young Tommy's great delight, his father made the blade go up and down, click, click. Tommy evidently approved of the result, for he began to click, click, with his tongue and the roof of his mouth in imitation; and how long he might have delayed his father we can't tell, if it were not that Mrs. Parsons caught him up in her arms, and made off with him; she calling Tommy a "saucy rogue," and kissing him all the way; and he, on his part, click, clicking, as though his mouth were a cutler's shop, and you were opening and shutting every knife in it.

Some folk might think that Sam Parsons had done enough in the oiling line for one day; but there was one thing more to do, and then he would be quite ready to take his potatoes to market. One or two of the wheels of his wagon had been a trifle creaky, and so he took the grease-pot, and gave them a touch of its contents. You could have rolled all he put upon them into the size of a couple of marbles, but 'twas quite enough; the wheels gave over creak-

ing, and, if the old proverb be true, that "Silence gives consent," no doubt they highly approved of what Sam had done.

"Now, then, I'm off to market," said Sam. "Good-by, Jenny, pet." Oh that little word, "pet"! didn't the cunning fellow oil his wife's temper, and even almost her very joints, for her day's work, when he called her that little name. "Good-by, Tommy, my darling." Oh you cunning man! there you are with your oiled feather again; for when Tommy was naughty, and his mother reminded him that she must tell his father, when he came home, and "father would be sore grieved if his darling was naughty," wasn't Tommy good? for child though he was, he was able to reason thus much in his mind: Tommy is father's darling, and he won't vex him; darlings ought not to vex those who love them. Never mind, good reader, if there's a flaw in the logic; nursery logic is sometimes very funny reasoning, but it answered the purpose; naughty Tommy became good, and clicked, clicked about the house as merry as a sunbeam, instead of sprawling and bawling on the ground; and all because his father happened to call him a darling before he went out.

"I say, Polly," said Sam Parsons to his one servant-maid, as he left the house, "don't forget to clean up those irons, if you can manage it, there's a good lass: you'll find the oil-flask hanging up behind the kitchen door;" and so, with a cheerful smile on

his countenance, Sam Parsons took his departure for market. Ah, cunning Sam! before he went, he oiled his wife and child, and now he oiled the servant-maid; and when he turned his back upon his own door, he left smiling faces and glad hearts behind him, and I warrant he found them all smiling to receive him when he came home.

CHAPTER II.

"RUSTY JOE" shall have a chapter to himself; we won't mix him up with "Polished Sam" on any account. Acid and sweet make a very good drink when mixed together, and we dare say Joe and Sam must meet before our story's done, and if they do, we hope it will be to do the reader good; but they must keep asunder for a while.

"Rusty Joe" had an idea that it was rather letting one's self down to be civil; he could not see the distinction between being sneaking and cringing and time-serving in one's conduct, and being civil and pleasant; he prided himself on being blunt and honest and upright, ay, and downright, too; but he forgot that he was often rude and surly and morose.

Now on this very morning, "Rusty Joe" was going to market also! and it so happened that he

ought to have done what his neighbor, "Polished Sam," had done; but he was above attending to such little things, and provided a thing could be done at all, he did not mind if it were by main force; a pull and a bang would do as well as any thing else; but pulls and bangs knock one's temper about a great deal; this, however, "Rusty Joe" did not take into account.

Before it was time for Joseph Irons to leave his house, on this eventful day, he had as much misery as would fall to his neighbor, "Polished Sam," in a week. In the first place, he had neglected to grease his boots, after last market day, which had been very wet; and now, when he went to put on these same boots, for the day promised to be wet again, they were so hard and stiff, that he pulled and kicked, and knocked and stamped, in vain. A very little of this work will try a man's temper, and at last Joe was about to give up in despair, when, with a final pull and kick, he knocked one foot into a boot; and, seeing that it would be almost as hard to pull out the leg, once it was in, as to get in the other, he knocked and kicked away until the second got in also. Bad temper is always bad for a man's digestion, and sometimes it will make him quarrel even with his meat, hence we need not be surprised to hear that nothing was right that morning at breakfast. The eggs were too hard, and the bread was too soft, the bacon dish was too hot, and the tea-pot

was too cold; and who can wonder, when Joe's two boots, as hard and stiff as if they had been frozen, were pinching his toes and heels, just as if they had ten wicked fingers with ten long claws on them. Ah! Joseph Irons, you should have greased your boots, or put the least drop in the world of linseed oil upon them, and you would have agreed much better with your breakfast; ay, and your breakfast would have agreed much better with you.

When Joseph Irons had bolted his breakfast, he got up and went to the street door to go out; but no loving word did he speak to his wife Betty, who, if the truth were known, was by no means sorry to get rid of him and his tempers for a while. True! Joseph never abused his wife; but he was exacting and unsympathizing, and gave very few kind words; and the consequence was, she just creaked along through life's duties; she did not run smoothly and swiftly like the wheels of Sam Parsons's wagon; nor had she any spring in her, like his well-oiled penknife; nor did she move about comfortably through the ins and outs of life, as Sam Parsons's oiled key did through the wards of his lock; she was a poor, downhearted creature, who never basked in the sunshine of a little love; who never heard the music of an affectionate word; who had, indeed, all the machinery of a woman's heart, with all its great capacity for doing wondrous things; but there was just something wanted to set it all agoing,—it was a little

love. "Mind you have my shirt finished to-night," said Joe Irons, as he laid his hand on the street door, "for I may have to go to Pitbank to-morrow, and I don't want to go to the Squire's in this old concern;" and with this direction to his wife, Mr. Irons took himself off.

But if Joe Irons met with trouble from want of a little oil, even before he got to his street door, he met with more when he got to the door itself. The door was stiff in its hinges, and stiff in the lock, ay, as stiff as if it had had the rheumatics for twenty years. After a little difficulty, Joe Irons opened his door, but he could not shut it with as little trouble again. That door seemed to have a will of its own; and, unfortunately, it was not just now the same as Joe Irons's will: perhaps it might have thought that the house, which smelt a little fusty, might be the better for some ventilation; or, may be, it was simply obstinate, and wouldn't shut; but so it was, that Joe gave it five or six pulls without success. Now it was no new thing to Joseph Irons to pull that door; he despised such a small thing as a drop of oil; the door had hitherto yielded to main force, and his strength was in no wise abated, so, "here goes," said he, and he gave it a bang with all his might. There was no resisting such an appeal as this; so the door was shut with a bang loud enough to rouse the whole neighborhood; but alas! my poor friend, Joe, you don't know what harm you did; you actually shook

the house, and broke a glass shade upon the chimney-piece in the parlor. That glass shade was part of the only ornament in the room; it covered two or three foreign birds, which Mrs. Irons's brother, who had been a mate in a vessel, brought her home from foreign parts; and Mrs. Irons was very much vexed. Had her husband spoken a kind word or two to her before leaving, she would, in all probability, have put up with the loss for his sake; but he had done nothing of the kind; and the consequence was, when the glass came tumbling down, she felt very irritated and sore.

This, then, was the way that "Rusty Joe" started forth to market; he met with trouble before he went to his street door, and when he arrived at it; and, as we shall presently see, with plenty more before he returned to it again.

The market town of —— was full ten miles from the village where "Rusty Joe" and "Polished Sam" lived; and there was a good deal of up-hill road on the way thither. The road was, moreover, heavy, for recent rain had fallen, and there seemed to be a prospect of more. Already had "Rusty Joe" lost some time over his boots and over the door; and it behooved him now to make as much speed as he could, in order to reach the market in time; of this he was well aware, and so he smacked his whip frequently, as he cleared the bounds of the village, and the long road lay before his. Rusty Joe's

troubles still lay thick before him; he soon found himself a poor, limping creature, and every step he took seemed to have a corresponding pinch belonging to it. Presently he began to feel conscious that he would be late for market, unless he could get on little faster; and accordingly, at any hazard to his unfortunate ten toes, he smacked his whip, and jee-hupped to his horses; but he soon found that they could not make much more way than himself. What was the matter? Was the load heavier than usual? Were the roads heavier? No: but "Rusty Joe" had not greased the wheels of his wagon for a long time; and now the vehicle went on, creak creak, as though it would come to pieces every moment. Main force was Joe's resource on all occasions, so he whipped the horses, and they pulled with all their might; but at the Blackford hill, they found the wagon so hard to move, that they had to stop over and over again.

Instead of making allowances for the poor beasts, which were really doing their best, our friend "Rusty Joe," determined to make them pull the wagon up the hill; accordingly he pulled a piece of whipcord out of his pocket, and his knife also, and while the horses stood puffing and panting and blowing with their exertions, he prepared to fit on a new lash. "I'll tickle you, my lads," said "Rusty Joe," and so saying, he applied his thumb-nail to the knife, to open the blade to cut the cord. The knife

was stiff; in fact, the hinge of the blade was rusted but the angry man would not lose any time over it: he made a tremendous effort; force, with him, would do every thing; and with a tremendous effort, he half opened the blade; but, in doing so, he broke his nail down to the quick, and the pain soon made itself plainly felt. Still the angry man was not to be put off; he cut the whipcord; he put on a new lash; and with a crack, crack, crack, he tried to start the horses with the creaking wagon up hill; but force will not do every thing in the world; the horses made such a plunge, under the influence of the smarting lash, that the harness broke, and, there stood "Rusty Joe," in a sad plight, neither able to go on or to return. Joe! you should have greased your boots, and you would not have been late. Joe! you should have oiled your door, and you would not have lost your temper. Joe! you should have oiled your wagon-wheels, and then your horses could have pulled it up the hill. Joe! you should have oiled your penknife, and you would not have torn your nail. Joe! you should have oiled your harness, and the leather would not have become rotten, and broken, as it has now done, in your time of need; and we must leave you there, Joe, upon the road-side, to meditate upon these things for a while: sorry, no doubt, that you are in such trouble, but hoping that you will come out of it, perhaps a sadder, but still a wiser man.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN "Polished Sam" left home on this eventful morning, he had a smile on his lip, and a bright, gladsome look in his eye; and if he had the world before him, he had a bright and happy home behind him.

Believe me, good reader, that a bright and happy home is a wonderful back-up to a man when he goes forth into a hard and cold world, to make his way through the day's business as best he can. On the present occasion, "Polished Sam" was backed up by Jenny, his wife; and by little Tommy, his son; and by Polly, the servant-maid; they had all smiled him forth on his journey, and they would all smile him home again; ay and Sam would be in a hurry to get home to all these smiling folk; and when he got a rub in the market from any of the Rusty Joes who might be there, he went famously through it all, for he knew he'd soon get home to peace and quiet and love again. You must not think, kind reader, that Sam Parsons didn't get knocks and rubs of all kinds in the world: he came in for his share; but he slipped through them better than other folk, for he was so civil and polished in his way, that he disarmed the ill feeling of many.

The first person Sam Parsons came in sight of was old Biddy Magrath, the woman who sold apples

at the corner of the street. "Good morning, Biddy,' said Sam.

"Good morning, and good luck," answered Biddy; "is it to market ye's going to-day, Mr. Parsons?"

"Yes, Biddy; can I do any thing for you?" said Sam.

"Can ye do any thing for me?" answered Biddy, "to be sure ye can: bring me two ounces of the best tay, and half a pound of brown sugar, and here's the money;" and so saying, Biddy pulled forth a ball of rag from her pocket, which, when unrolled, much after the fashion of an Egyptian mummy, developed a shilling.

"I'll get you a good cup," said Sam, as he took the shilling: "you'll never have a better cup than I wish you;" and he smacked his whip, and passed on.

Bridget Magrath had not much of the sunshine of the world falling upon her poor wrinkled face; and it was well for her she had naturally a cheerful temper. She led but a sorry life of it with the boys of the village; and Sam Parsons's kind word was one of the few gleams which fell to her lot. We can understand, therefore, the multitude of blessings wherewith Bridget overwhelmed Sam; how she called him all sorts of fine names, and at length how she subsided behind her rickety table, to sell apples, if she could, all day long, but, at any rate, to wait for the evening, and Sam's arrival with the "tay."

No doubt it was but a small kindness that Sam showed, but he made a fellow-creature happy by it; in fact, he oiled old Biddy, as well as his wife and child and maid; and Bridget was not half so cross all that day, because she had the remembrance of a kindly word and genial smile to help her through.

As Sam Parsons went to market, he had to surmount the same hill on which his neighbor, "Rusty Joe," afterwards fared so badly; the road was just as steep, his horses' load was just as heavy, and nothing but a little oil carried Sam successfully up that hill. The wheels of Sam's wagon turned easily enough, for he had not neglected to grease them; but all the grease in the world could not make the wheels turn by themselves; it is true, Sam had a little oil with him; he generally had a little bottle amongst a few odds and ends in a box attached to his wagon, but one cannot oil horses' hoofs or joints; so, on the present occasion, unless Sam Parsons were possessed of something more, he had little chance of surmounting Blackford hill; indeed, less chance than his neighbor, "Rusty Joe," had after him, for his horses were not so strong. But Sam Parsons had another oil-bottle, which was able effectually to do the work; Sam had a kind heart and word for man and beast, and this kind word carried him up the Blackford hill; yes, he oiled his horses with it, and up they went. When first the team desired to stop, Sam let the poor beasts rest to recover breath; he

put a couple of stones behind the wagon-wheels, and then went round and patted each of the horses on the neck; yes, he even rubbed their noses with his hand, and the horses seemed to understand that their master was caressing and encouraging them. If human beings rub noses in some part of the world and understand that form of salutation, why should not man and beast understand each other, when the former rubs the latter's nose? Well! Sam Parsons rubbed his horses' noses, and patted their necks, and thus the cunning fellow oiled them well; and when in a moment or two afterwards he smacked his whip, just as a matter of course, and cried jee-hup, and made other little persuasive noises, which we cannot write down, for horse-language is a thing by itself, the team gave a pull, a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and up the Blackford hill they went; and not one of them required the lash.

Now if Sam Parsons had told any one that he oiled his horses at the Blackford hill, they would in all probability have thought him mad: nevertheless, dear reader, he did really oil them as much as he did the wheels of the wagon they drew; he oiled their tempers, and, moreover, the oil put on them cost him nothing, and so the work was done. It is astonishing over what a surface a little oil will spread itself astonishing how many obstacles it will remove; astonishing how many evils it will avert; what a pity it is that folk don't know more of its value! Kind

words! kind deeds! kind looks! oh! they will often carry us up a hill of difficulty, where the lash and oath and angry temper would prove of no avail.

The whole space of this little book would be absorbed if we had to recount all Sam Parsons's ins and outs at the market town even this one day Were we to undertake such a task, we should have to tell how "Polished Sam" was served with a specially nice bit at the market inn; for the waiter always had a kind word, and an "if you please," and a "thank you" from him, when he had little more than gruff orders from most of the other farmers; we should also have to relate how a dealer who thought that Sam was very soft, because he was very civil, tried to "do" him in a bargain, but how our hero stood firm, for he was no fool, and did not want to be done; and got his fair price at last. We should also have to tell how Sam brought home a paper of sugar candy from the grocer at whose shop he bought old Bridget's tea; and how about a dozen folk, who were snarling and quarrelling with each other, all had a smile for him. Furthermore, we should have to tell how our hero, by a few kind words, threw oil on the troubled waters, when two ill-conditioned fellows were almost coming to blows; and how he put matters straight between them in two minutes, after they had been wrangling nearly two hours; but why say, good reader, how much we

could tell you, when we don't mean to do any thing of the kind, and when it is high time for "Polished Sam" to be thinking of going home.

CHAPTER IV.

"RUSTY JOE" made a bad day's business of it: he never got to market at all. A little examination of the harness showed that it was completely done for; and he had to untackle his horses, leave his wagon there, and make the best of his way home. With one delay and another, it was coming on evening before this unfortunate man could fetch his wagon home again. "Rusty Joe" tried one person and another in the village who had harness; he sent to some of his brother farmers round about, but no one seemed inclined to go out of his way to oblige him; they had all at some time met with rudeness at his hands, and now they did not want to have any thing to do with him. Of course we are not commending their conduct; they ought to have returned good for evil, but, as is too often the case, they did not.

So much time was consumed in sending about to the neighbors, and in endeavoring to cobble up a harness of rope, that it was coming on evening, before "Rusty Joe" was able to return with his

horses to the wagon; and when he reached it, he was destined to meet with a fresh trouble, — the wagon was not as he had left it; the covering had evidently been moved; and poor Joe found out, only too soon, the reason why; for no small part of the contents of the wagon had been stolen; a gipsy party had passed that way, and they had made free with the unguarded property.

When "Rusty Joe" found that he had not only lost his market, but also some of the produce that he was carrying there, and when he reflected that it was upon the sale of that very produce he was in part depending to pay his rent, he became as savage as an old bear: he cursed and swore; but that, like all cursing and swearing, did him no good; and at last he sat down by the road-side. "Rusty Joe" had not been there many minutes, when he heard the sound of wheels; and soon "Polished Sam" appeared in sight, with his team; Sam was whistling like a blackbird, and the bells on his horses were tinkling cheerily; and he and the team seemed more like a merry family party than any thing else. A moment's glance was sufficient to show Sam Parson that there was something wrong, and he hastened as fast as he safely could, down the hill, to meet his unhappy neighbor; to sympathize and help. But "Rusty Joe" wanted no help; no, not he: some folk were lucky, and some were unlucky; and he didn't want other folk to be prying into and meddling with

his affairs, and the ungracious man carried on in this style for full half an hour. As Joe would not be helped, of course Sam could not interfere; but he found various excuses for dawdling about, until his neighbor had managed to get the horses harnessed and put to; then, with a muttered curse or two, the man and his horses started for home. But oh! what a chorus of creaks came from his dry and squeaking wheels; and so stiffly and heavily did the wagon roll, that there is no knowing when it would have reached home, or whether it would not have broken down again by the way, had not Sam Parsons ventured to offer a little help once more. Sam, in the kindness of his heart, had kept close to his neighbor; and now he made bold to suggest that the wagon could never be got home without a little grease. "You heard it creaking, neighbor," said he to "Rusty Joe," "and I believe it was just for want of a little grease, it stuck so fast upon the hill;" so saying, Sam Parsons produced a little from his wagon, and managed to get it well on to the creaking wheels. Marvellous was the change: the creaks suddenly subsided into silence, and the horses easily drew their load; even the patched-up harness was quite equal to its work, so slight was the strain put upon it.

With all his grumpy tempers, "Rusty Joe" was not sorry to receive such substantial help; so he allowed Sam Parsons to walk by his side, Sam's

wagon following close behind. Sam was not long before he spied Joe halting very much on one foot. Sam sympathized with him for having corns, and had just begun a dissertation on the virtue of a certain corn-plaster, when his companion told him that it was stiff shoe-leather that was doing the mischief. "The boots are as stiff as if they were frozen," said "Rusty Joe," "ever since the last market-day, when they got such a wetting." "Whee-o-o," whistled Sam, "I'll soften them in two minutes;" and slipping behind to his wagon, he brought forth his oil-bottle, and gave the boots a good anointing with its contents. Of course, the cure could not be perfect in so short a time, still "Rusty Joe" could not but see that a little oil was able to do wonders: the boots seemed to have become quite good-natured; and it was a question whether a little more oil would not make them even frolicsome. "I have great faith in oil," said Sam Parsons: "I oil almost everything; this very morning I oiled the lock of my street-door and my penknife, and I greased my wagon-wheels, and I oiled my wife and child, and I gave the servant-maid a touch, too; and I tell you what it is, neighbor Joe, I slip along famously, where I find many another sticks fast." "Rusty Joe's" torn nail seemed to give him a fresh twinge when the penknife was spoken about, and as to the wife, his conscience reminded him how bearishly he had behaved to her at breakfast. "What do you mean by oiling you

wife, man?" said "Rusty Joe," rather tartly: "you haven't been sneaky, have you, and knocking under to a woman?" and "Rusty Joe" edged away from "Polished Sam's" side, as though he were near some slimy serpent. "No, indeed," answered Sam, "I've not been knocking any way, neither over nor under but I just gave her and the bantling a loving word before I started from home: and I said a kind word to the lass to cheer her up through her work for the day; and for the matter of that, I gave the old apple-woman a touch of my oiled feather too: few people say a kind word to her, and so I did, and, I dare say, it helped her through the day, too! I wouldn't cringe to any one living," continued "Polished Sam," "not to the queen herself: but to cringe is one thing, to be civil, respectful, and loving, according as the case requires, is another; I never knew ill come of it, and I've often known good. Yes, neighbor, I've known the good of it in my own house, over and over again: there's my Jenny, you don't know the work there's in that little creature; bless you! she'd work herself to the finger-bone if you give her a kind word; I knowed her to sit up seven nights with me, without taking off a stitch of her clothes, that time I broke my leg; and when I said to her one morning, as the day was breaking, and I looked at her red eyelids, 'Jenny, my darling, I can never pay you for all this,' — didn't she laugh and say, 'Why, Sam, how can you tell such a story? you've paid me now.'"

"'Paid you, woman, why what do you mean?'"

"'Didn't you say my darling?'"

"'To be sure I did,' said Sam."

"'Well! wasn't that payment *to a woman's heart?*'"

"And she looked so earnest like at me, that I felt the tears come into my eyes. Oh, neighbor, I couldn't say it as she said it; for these women have a way of speaking that don't belong to us men; sometimes I think there's something that makes music in their throats; but ever since that day, I've been ten times as loving as I was before, and I try to say a kind word, not only to Jenny, but to every one I meet. I believe, neighbor," continued Sam, "that women's of that nature, that they'll do any thing for love: no use our driving them, our scolding, and ordering, and banging about: that only makes slaves of them; but give them a little love, and they'll do wonders." As Sam Parsons found that his neighbor was listening, he was encouraged to go on, even though he received no answer. "And I do the same," said Sam, "by every wench that comes to service to me; servants are made of the same stuff as their mistresses; they all have hearts, and the same kind of oil will reach them all."

Thus discoursing, Sam Parsons reached his own farm-yard; there was Jenny his wife ready to meet him with a kiss, and there was Tommy, who received his father with a click, click, leaving it a matter of

speculation as to whether he had not been clicking ever since the morning until now; and then there was Polly, the servant-maid, standing close to the irons, which shone as though they were fresh from the shop; she hoped they'd catch her master's eye, and she knew she'd get a kind word: and when Sam went into the sitting-room, there he saw a great heap of his stockings that Jenny had been darning; and when Sam sat down to tea, there was a pie that Jenny had made; and if Sam had been a little boy instead of a grown-up man, he would certainly have patted his chest and smacked his lips, and so expressed his opinion, that that was "something like a pie." One would think that Sam Parsons had oiled the pie, so smoothly did each piece slip down his throat, for he was at peace with Jenny his wife, Tommy his son, and Polly the servant-maid. Good humor promotes digestion, and our readers will be glad to hear that Sam slept well upon that good supper, and had pleasant dreams, and woke up refreshed, to be happy and make others happy all day long.

CHAPTER V.

Our friend, "Rusty Joe," shall have the last chapter all to himself. And first of all it must be told that "Polished Sam's" observations were not alto

gether thrown away upon him. Although he wouldn't let on to other folk that he was a miserable man, still he really was so, and he owned it to himself; his conscience kept saying to him, "You are all of a piece, 'force, force,' 'must, must,' 'shall, shall, for everybody and every thing." The contrast between his happy neighbor and his miserable self could not but strike the poor man's mind, and he made a desperate resolution to reform. "I'll do it, I'll do it," said Joe, in a loud voice, never thinking that there was any one to hear him; but it so happened that the parson was close behind; and struck with his parishioner's energy, he said, "Do what?" "Reform," answered Joe, like a man in a dream, who feels himself obliged to speak whether he like or not.

"We can't reform in any thing without the grace of God to help us," said the minister, "and we must ask for that, Mr. Irons."

This speech seemed to rouse Joe up, and he felt very queer when he found himself actually embarked in a conversation with the parson: all this was so very new, that Joe didn't quite like it, and indeed he would have backed out of the conversation as quickly as possible, but that the parson, who always stuck like a piece of wax to his work, was too glad to get a word with his rusty parishioner, easily to let him go. Gently and gradually he drew from the poor, crest-fallen fellow the whole of what was in

his mind, and when Joe came to his own house, he even asked the parson in.

The minister felt like a fish out of water in Joe Irons's house; but it was very well that he went in; for Joe's wife, irritated by the destruction of her solitary ornament, and by her husband's rude way of speaking, had not done his shirt, nor paid any very special attention to what he was to eat. The minister's presence prevented any harsh words; and his wise and loving counsel led Joe and his wife to forgive and forget the past, and commence afresh that night, by asking for strength from heaven to speak, do, and be like Jesus Christ. He read for them that night the 133d Psalm, and showed them "how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity: how it is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

That very night Joe began. When the minister was going, he actually handed him his hat, and made a kind of attempt at a bow at the door. And Joe's wife began; for she bathed his poor broken nail, and sat up nearly all night to get ready his shirt; and when the morning came, "Rusty Joe" oiled almost every thing he had, and in a twelve months' time he was liked as well as any one in the parish. Yes!

there were no more banging of doors in Joe Irons's house; there were no more rough words between him and his wife; there was enough of kindness to make home comfortable, and a little to spare to make neighbors agreeable, and Joe Irons became a happy man. Joe's choicest friend was henceforth "Polished Sam;" and Joe kept as close to his skirts as though he expected to rub some of the polish from him upon himself. Joe never forgot the parson's advice to seek strength for improvement on his knees; and, by way of a reminder, that he should not forget his new principles, he hung something over his bedroom mantel-piece, so that it should be the first thing that met his eyes when he awoke; and what do you think it was, good reader?

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The Man Who Kept Himself in Repair

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THE MAN WHO KEPT HIMSELF IN REPAIR.

CHAPTER I.

SHOWS HOW MR. JOSEPH FLICKER KEPT HIMSELF IN REPAIR.

MR. JOSEPH FLICKER might have been called a "cobbler," by that class of persons who always take delight in giving their fellow-creatures credit for as little as possible; but those who were of a generous turn of mind would probably have called him a "shoemaker;" and perhaps this latter term would have been the more courteous of the two. Not that it made much difference to our friend Joseph, whether they called him "cobbler," or "shoemaker:" his destiny in life appeared to be to repair boots and shoes, rather than to make them; but this want of originality in the worthy man's work, did not prevent his having some very original thoughts in his mind; and to have a good, original thought in one's mind, is better any day than to make a new and perfectly original pair of shoes or boots; even of such a pattern as men's eyes

had never seen, or ladies' tortured feet wriggled in before. But this observation, like many others in the world, requires qualification. Whether the original thought is better than the original boots, will depend upon whether a man keeps it to himself or not. Now Joe Flicker held this opinion. He believed that good thoughts were meant, like good boots and shoes, to walk about the world; and they had this advantage, — that they never would wear out. Accordingly, when Joe got a thought, and was sure that it was a genuine good one, and likely to be of benefit to his fellow-creatures, he started it forth in the world, and charged people nothing for the use of it. Whether the world would have given Joe any thing for his thoughts, is, perhaps, a question; but as the cobbler thought that to be the father of a good, original notion was a very high honor, we need not trouble ourselves about his dealings with the world, in relation thereto, nor with the world's dealings with him. If there were any dealings upon this matter at all, they were amicable, and perhaps liberal, for all we know; for Joe was always happy; his eye was always bright; and his lips always wore a smile.

When Joe first started in life, his destiny appeared to be that of all shoemakers; viz., to make span new boots and shoes; and visions, no doubt, often crossed his mind of his rising to eminence in his trade. But whenever he climbed up the hill a little bit, and got

so far as to have half a dozen pairs of boots and shoes in his little window, he invariably tumbled down again; until at last, he really believed it was never meant that he should climb up the hill at all.

This circumstance, no doubt, helped to settle Joe Flicker's position in life as a "cobbler;" or, as his wife, who was fond of a touch of gentility, called him, "a jobbing shoemaker." But there was another circumstance which seemed to point out that Joe was to provide for his family, and benefit his fellow-creatures in the vocation of a "cobbler." Our friend had a positive talent for repairing boots and shoes: he could vamp, and sole, and heel, and turn out an old friend as good as new; and as to those little toe-pieces, which are so familiar to most mothers and nurses of large families, Joe Flicker could make them look quite ornamental; so as to leave it almost a matter of doubt whether the little shoe wasn't better in its last estate than in its first. Joe Flicker took a delight in his work; and many were the dilapidated shoes, that would otherwise have been thrown away, which were set up by his doctoring with, so to speak, a new constitution altogether; and which, instead of lying in a ditch, might be seen in high romps at football and leap-frog on the village green.

Fame brought fortune, to a certain extent, to our friend Joe Flicker. All the neighborhood brought

him boots and shoes to repair; and, as every one was willing to pay a good price for really good work, the worthy man throve, and did an excellent trade in a small way.

Seeing that his life was thus spent in piecing and patching, is it any wonder that the cobbler's mind was constantly fixed upon the subject of repairs? And, seeing that most of the craft are, more or less, thinking men, is it any wonder that Joe Flicker thought, as he cobbled and patched? He did think; and his mind, taking his stool and bench as a centre, travelled forth into contemplations of many of the problems and relationships of daily life.

Wherever Joe turned, he saw not only that things were, for the most part, what they ought not to be, but also not what they might be. "The tendency of every thing," said the cobbler to himself, "is to go to ruin. As soon as ever you make a shoe, it begins to wear out; as soon as you wind up a clock, it begins to run down; you no sooner build a house, but it begins to want something to keep it up; and if things go beyond a certain point, it is impossible to bring them back." It was in vain that Joe Flicker pondered on a remedy for this: he thought long, and deeply; but such a thing was not to be found.

"But now," said the cobbler to himself, "though we can't remedy this state of things altogether, still, it is our duty, and it certainly will be both to our comfort and advantage, to improve it as much as lies

in our power. The great point, then, is to keep a sharp look-out, and keep every thing in repair;" and upon this principle in life Joe determined to go. "And I'm sure," said the cobbler, when he made this resolution, "I shall be happier and richer for it too. For just look," said he to himself, "at this shoe," as he turned and twisted a small one in his hands: "Mrs. Smith will have to pay 6*d.* for these toe-caps; and she can't well afford that. There are six of them to be shod, and her husband's wages are only sixteen shillings a week. Now I can see all about this shoe in the twinkle of an eye. This is what I call a stitch-in-time shoe; if Mrs. Smith had only sent it to me when the first stitch began to rip, 'twould have cost her only 2*d.* instead of 6*d.*, as it will now. Dear me! when will folk learn to look after repairs? and that in every thing, as well as their shoes."

Joe Flicker might have branched out into a great variety of thoughts, but that his attention was turned to a rapping at the door; and, in a moment after, there entered a long, lanky-looking man, with uncombed hair, and dilapidated clothes; and in his hands he held the skeleton of a pair of boots.

"Here, Joe," said the lanky man, "can you make any thing of these here boots? If any man in the parish can, you are the man."

"Let's see them," answered Joe. "They're very far gone."

"I let them go too far," said the lanky man; "they

were prime boots, 'tis a pity I didn't keep them in repair."

"'Tis a pity you don't keep yourself in repair," said Joe Flicker, looking at him with a glance as sharp as one of the points of his own awls; "'tis a pity, John Thatch, that you don't keep *yourself* in repair;" and he laid strong emphasis on this word "yourself."

Jack Thatch looked hard at the cobbler for a few moments, holding the half-skeleton, half-ghost-like boots at full length from him, and said, in a half-puzzled, half-boozy kind of way, — "Joe Flicker, what do you mean?"

"Throw down those boots," said Joe; "it's no use your trying to make them stand up like respectable boots: throw them down there, poor, ill-used creatures; and I'll tell you what I mean."

"'Tis my belief," said the cobbler, "that every man has only a lease of himself, — and that a repairing one; and the like of his wife and children; and 'tis as plain as that I have this shoe in my hand, that you aren't keeping yourself in repair."

"Go on," said Jack Thatch. "It does a man good to hear you talk; he! he! I don't think I've been in repair for a precious long time."

"I *will* go on," said the cobbler; "whenever I make a beginning I always like to go on until I come to the end. Now, look at your hat: a hat is a man's roof, and yours wouldn't fetch sixpence; I

wonder you ain't dead long before this with cold in your head. And look at your coat! 'tis hanging in ribbons on your back; and then your boots: boots might be said to be a man's foundation; anyhow, said Joe, "they're the lowest story; and from your attic to your basement, you're out of repair."

"Go on, Joe," said John Thatch.

"Yes: I *will* go on, John; and how do you come to be out of repair? Why, by that horrid dram shop that you're always at; and you'll never be in decent repair as long as you go there."

"Well, *you're* in tidy repair, anyhow," said John Thatch, as he looked at the cobbler's shining face, and decent clothes, and rolled his eyes round the comfortable little room.

"So I am," said Joe. "I'm in what I call tenantable repair; I ain't what the agent calls in decorative repair, — that means painting and gilding, and such like finery — but all good and solid; at least as good and solid as I can make it: weather proof, you know, not hurt by wind or rain."

"That'll do now," said Jack Thatch; "when will the boots be done?"

"'Twill set me hard to do them at all," answered the cobbler: "still, though I say it, if any man in the parish can do them, I'm the man; but you can't have them for a month. I'm not one of those men that say a fortnight when they mean a month. When I say a day, I mean to keep to it; and I've

promised so many folk before you, that it will be a month before these boots are done."

"Well, go on," said Jack Thatch, "and I'll call for them then."

As soon as the cobbler and his visitor parted, they fell, each of them, into their own particular train thought. The cobbler, with some difficulty, made Jack's boots stand up; and having accomplished this, he proceeded to address them as if Jack's feet were inside them; and, by consequence, as if Jack himself were there.

"Ah! Cousin Jack," said he, "you got a better start in life than I did; you were sent out into the world bran new, with a neat house and a good business, but see what you're come to. You began to get out of order when you dropped in every day for a half-pint at the "Boar with the Shining Tusks:" and that was the first slate off the roof; and then, when you took to lounging in of an evening, there were the rafters gone; and when you tottered and tumbled out, there were the foundations gone. If I were a pair of boots, I'd rather be thrown away at once, than tumbling about in that fashion. I don't know that 'tis a kindness to repair you at all," said Joe, addressing the boots; "but as I promised to do so, I will; and, perhaps, your owner will be ashamed when he sees you looking so much more decent than himself."

Jack Thatch had acquired that sad boozy habit

of looking stupid, but he was not always indifferent to what was said; and, on the present occasion, he was sober, and quite able to take in the remarks the cobbler had made.

"So I'm out of repair," said Jack, "am I? humph that's a new light to look at one's self in — from the roof down to the cellar — eh! that ain't creditable, is it? especially for a young man who comes of people who always kept themselves up in the world. Well! the sooner I'm put in repair the better, that's all; but before I begin, I'll have a glass;" and being by this time quite close to the "Boar with the Shining Tusks," in he stepped, to take a half-pint. The half-pint was drawn, and stood foaming on the counter, and Jack put his hands in his ragged trousers' pocket, to find wherewithal to pay; but he had not a penny, and he began to apologize to the landlady, as he took the glass in his hands.

But that glass of beer Jack Thatch was never destined to drink; and a very good thing it turned out for him, that he was not.

"Stay, stay," said the landlady, stretching out her fat, rosy arm, and laying hold of the glass; "do you think, John Thatch, that we can always be giving credit? I'd like to know how we can keep the roof over our heads, and pay house rent and taxes, to say nothing of repairs, if we go on in this style; no! no! no more liquor for you, Mr. Thatch, except what you pay down for."

Poor Jack looked stupidly at the landlady, who in turn looked saucily at him, and slowly and sorrowfully turned away from the bar; while his beer was handed over to a customer who was standing by, and who had put down the money on the counter.

"Repairs!" said Jack, slowly to himself, "repairs she couldn't keep her house in repair, but for my money, and that of other drinking folk; and she does keep her house in repair, doesn't she?" said Jack, looking at the plate-glass windows and the bright new paint; "she keeps her place in repair; and Joe Flicker says I don't keep myself in repair; one and one make two," said Jack, "and, putting these ones together, that I'm out of repair, and the 'Boar with the Shining Tusks' is always looking span new, I'm of opinion that we can't both be kept in repair at the same time; and I'll look to it and try whether I can't do myself up a bit."

So Jack Thatch refrained from the "Boar with the Shining Tusks" for a month, and kept hard at work. It was fortunate that the nature of his work was such that most of it could be done in the half-worn-out slippers, in which he had gone to the cobbler's, otherwise he could not have commenced his new career until his boots were mended; and that would have been a whole month lost.

In due course of time, it came to be the turn of Jack Thatch's boots to be taken in hand. They were now taken down from the wall, where they had

been hung by his cousin the cobbler, partly to be out of the way, partly to be gibbeted as representatives of their owner, who deserved in some way to be made an example of, and partly to be kept in their proper turn; for Joe Flicker would show them no favor, and there were several others to come before them.

Nor were the boots any losers by thus having to await their turn. During this interval the cobbler had heard of the attempts of his cousin to reform; and he determined to give him a good start, as he was getting on his legs again. So he soled and heeled and vamped the boots, and stuck a new piece of red lining inside, and polished them up, until the cat made a looking-glass of them, and shook hands with herself in them, in half a friendly and half a suspicious way. Then Joe hung up the boots again, and covered them with a cloth, to keep them perfectly bright, until their owner appeared.

As Jack knew that the cobbler was a man of his word, and that the boots would be surely done to the moment when they were promised, and as he was now ashamed to be seen in the worn slippers, and so generally out of repair, he came to Joe Flicker's shop on the appointed day. And to Jack's credit, it must be chronicled, that he arrived in much better condition than he was in on his first visit; for he had been able to take a few things out of pawn, and put himself a little in repair.

"Well, Joe, are the boots done?" asked Jack Thatch, as he entered the little shop.

Joe Flicker looked up, and then laid down his awl, and the shoe which he was mending, and finally rose from his bench, and deliberately walked three times round Jack Thatch, without saying a single word which could account for so extraordinary a journey. Having performed these revolutions, he retired backward to his stool, and dropped down upon it, still keeping his eyes fixed upon Jack.

At length he broke silence, and said, "Jack Thatch, you've been and got yourself repaired."

"Yes," said Jack, "I've been repairing myself; and I'm all the better for being a little done up."

"You *are*," said Joe Flicker; and he laid a long, strong emphasis on the word "are," — "You are. Now sit down here, and tell us all about it."

Then Jack seated himself on the only chair in the room, and told the cobbler how he couldn't get rid of the idea of being out of repair, after what he said; and then, how it was fixed in his mind by the landlady's speech; and then, how horrid it seemed to him that he should be keeping other people's places in repair, at the expense of himself and those belonging to him; while he and his were going to ruin worse and worse every day; and, — but the cobbler could hold out no longer: jumping hastily up, he rushed to the wall, and unveiled the sparkling boots, and cried, "Jack Thatch, you'll yet be worthy of

those boots; ay, and of much more, too: there they are; and not a penny will I take for them, until you and your wife and your children are all put into thorough repair, and, so to speak, made as good as new."

The tears came into poor Jack's eyes, as the cobbler made him then and there get into the boots, and stand in them with his feet in different attitudes, to see how he looked; and then shook him by the hands, and slapped him on the back, and wished him "Good speed."

"Ah, Joe!" said Jack, "'tis much better to do as you have done, — not to allow one's self to get out of repair, — than to make such a mistake, and repair it ever so well at last. How did you keep right without half the chances I have had?"

"Don't say 'keep right,'" said the cobbler with a serious look: "who keeps right? 'tis just because I knew I was always by nature likely to get out of repair, that I watched myself; and what I say of myself, I may say of all belonging to me too. You see, Jack, here's what I thought. There is a sort of rottenness in every thing that makes it its nature to decay, and get out of repair; and so it will be as long as the world is as it is now. Our bodies! ain't they always getting out of order, and wanting the doctor? our houses! our clothes! our tempers! our business! all things, if left to themselves, go wrong instead of right; and we must be always getting them put to rights."

"Well, Joe, and how did you come to think of all this?"

"I used my eyes," said the cobbler, "and saw it; didn't the very business of my life — always repairing — tell me something about it? And I used this," said Joe; and he pulled out a small book from kind of little box in his bench; "you know this book well: many people are ashamed of it, but I'm not: 'tis a Bible; and this taught me how all the decay comes; and it showed me where to go to, to get it repaired. I say, first and chief, this has been my counsellor and friend: there would be less want of repairs, if people attended to what it says; and when repairs are wanted, they'd be better done, if they minded it then; but folk are wise enough in their own eyes, and that's the way to become fools."

"Well," said Jack Thatch, "but don't you *do* any thing to keep yourself all right? You're smirking and smiling when other people are frowning and growling; and you always have decent clothes, when many a man with as good earnings is naked; I'd like to know what you *do*."

"Well, cousin," answered the cobbler, "I do all I can to keep myself in repair. Here's this little body, — 'tain't half the size of yours, and it has had a wonderful deal better treatment; but if I were careless about it, I'd soon be laid up and unfitted to work; and then, who'd look after my wife and children here? What's food? isn't it repairs for the

waste of the body? and what's sleep? isn't it the same? so I take care, out of what I earn, to have good, wholesome food, and stout, warm clothes; and I go to bed at decent hours, and get enough of sleep: that's what I do. And when this little room gets foul and close, then I throw open the window, and that repairs it; and so I go on, always repairing, and always keeping in repair. And mind you, Jack Thatch, the great thing is to repair *at once*. 'A stitch in time saves nine.' Many a shoe that comes here with sixpence and eightpence for repairs, would have only been twopence if it had been brought in time. We must not be put out, Jack, at having repairs to do: 'tis unreasonable that we should; twill be so as long as we are in this world at all. And remember, things get worse, faster and faster, twice as fast to-morrow, and four times as fast as that the next day; that's a thing to be remembered, when we are letting ourselves go to rack and ruin, as we are by nature inclined to do.

"And I sometimes do some *extra* repairs. When I get seedy, I treat myself to a half-holiday, and go in the train over to the hills, and come home a new kind of man; and this is the way, in part, that I'm always smiling and always happy."

"Well, Joe, but many folk live well, and they're not happy."

"Ay," said Joe; "perhaps they live to eat, and don't eat to live. But I do something more to myself than

this: I'm always keeping my *temper* in repair. You wouldn't believe it," said Joe, "but I'm sometimes inclined to be as sharp as this awl; then I turn to this good friend," — and the cobbler laid his hand on the Book, — "and I go down upon my knees, and I get the better of myself. Believe me, Jack, a man's knees are wonderful tools, if he'd only use them as he ought. And sometimes I sit and think: ay Jack, you're not much given to thinking, but thought is a wonderful tool, if you have the patience to use it; and I say to myself, 'Joe Flicker, how much better off are you than others!' 'Joe Flicker, how much better off are you than you deserve to be!' 'Joe Flicker, after all, does this trouble matter so very much; won't it soon be over?' 'Joe Flicker, how will you make the best of it? perhaps it needn't be as bad as it looks.' Then I always wind up with this one saying, 'Joe Flicker, 'tis only for a while!'

"I say many such things," said the cobbler, "but these are some of them; and what between the Book, and the knees, and this talk with myself, I very soon come right."

"Well, you're a happy man," said Jack Thatch, who now sat with his legs stretched out before him, and his eyes riveted upon his transformed boots. Whether Jack was oppressed with the responsibility of being in such good boots, after having gone about for so long a time, down at heel in his old slippers, or whether he was meditating how he ought to con-

duct himself in those boots, which were evidently intended for a respectable, well-to-do kind of man, we cannot tell; but so it was, that he looked very serious, and apparently full of thought. In this reverie the cobbler, who was a thinking man himself, allowed his visitor to indulge for a while; and after a considerable pause, he said, "Well, Cousin Jack, what are you thinking about, — admiring the boots still, eh! or what?"

CHAPTER II.

SHOWS HOW MR. JOSEPH FLICKER KEPT HIS WIFE IN REPAIR.

JACK THATCH was roused from his reverie by the cobbler's voice; and the latter, not being quite sure as to whether his question had been heard, again asked his cousin what he was thinking about.

"About my wife," said Jack.

"And a very good thing to think about, too," said the cobbler; "if a wife's worth having, she's worth thinking about; and thinking a great deal about, too. I wish men would think a little more about their wives. There would be a deal more comfort in families if they did."

"Mine gives me a plaguy deal to think about," said Jack Thatch.

"That's because you don't think enough about her," said the cobbler. "There's a kind of riddle here: and indeed some folk say that wherever there's a woman, there's a riddle; however, here it is: 'The more you think about your wife, the less she'll give you to think about.'"

"I'm not good at riddles," said Jack Thatch, "and what's that in plain English?"

"Why, the meaning of it is this: if you make it your business to take thought for your wife, she'll know she's cared for; and she'll value it, and value you; and she'll try and be a credit to you; and she won't give you cause for anxiety, running into debt, neglecting your children and yourself, and perhaps drinking, driven to it by neglect and ill words, and, it may be, even hard blows. That's not the kind of treatment that women require," said the cobbler; "they're very brittle kind of things. So far from being banged about, either with words or blows, or any thing unkind, they require a deal of care. They're likely enough to go out of order, if they're left to themselves, without our doing them any harm; in fact, they're like you and me, they want to be kept always in repair. But here comes Mrs. Flicker," said the cobbler, with an extra smile on his jolly face; "here she comes, and right glad I am always to see her, although the chances are a hundred to one she wants something or other."

But this sentiment the cobbler had all to himself

Jack Thatch was not at all anxious to see Mrs. Flicker: for the latter was a very out-spoken, and indeed, sometimes, vehement woman; and she had more than once given her cousin a bit of her mind about his conduct to his wife and children.

Now this the cobbler knew very well; and as poor Jack was evidently on the mending hand, he did not want him to get a lecture from Mrs. Flicker, at this particular time. The only thing, therefore, was to put him out of the way; and this could be done only by stuffing him into a little kind of cupboard, which, at that particular time, was fortunately empty; but which generally held the cobbler's stores of leather. In a trice, accordingly, Jack found himself imprisoned; and, in another trice, Mrs. Flicker was in her husband's little room.

"Well, my dear,
Welcome here,"

half said, half sang, the cobbler. "You know, Betsey, though I'm very fond of singing, I never made a song in my life, but this one; and I sing it whenever you come to visit me at my bench. Come, sit down a minute on that chair."

"I can't sit down," said Mrs. Flicker; "for Mrs. Stone is going to Burnthorpe to-day, and she offered me a ride in her cart, if I chose to go. Drapery is much cheaper there than here, and Mary wants a new frock, and Joseph can't go longer without two

more shirts; and, as we don't run credit, I'm come to know if you can give me some money."

"How much will they be?" said Joe.

"They'll be fifteen shillings the lot."

"Fifteen shillings," repeated the cobbler, — "and five for a new ribbon for your bonnet, Betsey: that's twenty; and there's a sovereign."

"But you can't spare it?" said Mrs. Flicker.

"Ay, ay," answered her husband; "I can always spare something for my wife. I've saved that sovereign on purpose, when I heard you say at Christmas that you thought the young ones were getting shabby; and I'll never forget the mother, when I remember the children," said the cobbler, — "no, never:" and he cried, "catch," and sent the coin tumbling over and over in the air, until it fell into his wife's hand.

"There's a good man," said Mrs. Flicker; and she nodded twenty little nods, of a very loving kind, at her husband; which nods the latter apparently received quite safely, for he looked brim full of satisfaction and delight, and sent them all back to his wife again. "Now I'm off," said Mrs. Flicker; and giving her husband a farewell nod at the door, she disappeared.

And a great thing it was for Jack Thatch that Mrs. Flicker had taken herself off so quickly; for the closet was so small, that he could not have remained there long; and much he dreaded an inter

view with this good woman, who knew well how little he had done for his wife and family.

Jack first peered cautiously out of the cupboard door, to make sure that the last particle of Mrs. Flicker had disappeared; then he came out: and on the cobbler's assuring him that his wife would not return, he seated himself again in his former seat.

"Now, Jack," said the cobbler, "you saw, or at least you heard me do a little bit of repairs. I repair Mrs. Flicker from time to time, just as I do myself; for we're both made of the same flesh and blood. Men don't always remember that. They seem to think that women are always to keep on working, and being worried with children, and no one knows what, and yet never want any thing to keep them up. That's how some women become drunkards. They have no one to cheer them up a bit, and they think spirits and beer will do it; but they make a great mistake. Here's another of my riddles," said the cobbler. "How can a man keep his wife in good spirits, without spending any thing on liquor?"

"And how often do you repair Mrs. Flicker?" asked Jack Thatch.

"I'm always at it," answered the cobbler, "more or less; for, d'ye see, Cousin Jack, women require to be kept a trifle in decorative as well as substantial repair; and I do enjoy seeing her nice, that I

do. I'm not a man for fandango finery, not I: but I like what's a little tasty, provided 'tis good, and in a quiet way. You'll see, she'll bring home as neat a bit of ribbon as ever you saw; and she'll look all the fresher with that little bit of trimming, though it isn't fine, and isn't dear.

"Ever since I got Mrs. Flicker," said the cobbler, "and I took up this notion of 'Repairs,' I've put it in practice on her; and so she is what she is to-day. Some folk starve their poor wives, for they spend their wages, you know how; but I said to myself, 'How can a woman keep up, if she isn't well fed? and how can she respect herself, if you don't give her the means of being respectable?' and I'm proud to say," said the cobbler, drawing his waxed threads so tight that the wonder was they didn't break, and holding them there, "I'm proud to say, she has never wanted since the day I called her mine. But there are times, Jack, when all the good food in the world won't nourish, — times when the spirits sink, and the heart sickens, and the nerves go all astray, and nobody can tell where the repairs are wanting, or how they are to be done. Then I have kind words for her; and they seem almost always to find out the sore places, and drop like oil upon them, and heal them up. But there are times, Jack, when even these won't do. Then I bring out this book; and I find that it can do for her and me what nothing else can; and I try these," said the cobbler, laying down

the shoe he was mending, and putting a hand on each knee; "and if I were to tell you how much all this has brought us through, you wouldn't believe it; no, nor would anybody, unless they tried, and found it out for themselves. You hear folk making sport of religion, and of prayer, and saying, 'there's nothing in it;' but there's two ways of trying a thing; and if folk were not earnest and real, what wonder if they found no good?"

"'Tis my wife's temper that troubles me," said Jack Thatch; "she's wonderful fretty, and at times fractious, too."

"Ah," said the cobbler, "when this happens, she's out of repair; and you should set to work and put her to rights, as soon as ever you can. I take just as much pains to keep my good woman's temper right, as any thing else."

"Why, to look at Mrs. Flicker," interrupted Jack Thatch, "no one would think that her temper was ever put out."

"Jack Thatch," said the cobbler, a little quickly "my wife is only a woman. She's flesh and blood; and what worries flesh and blood, will worry her. Women have often a great deal more to worry them than men; and, what's more, they can't get away from their worries as we can. The wonder to me is, that any woman that brings up a large family of children has any temper left; yes! that there's any of her left at all; and I act accordingly. I believe

as I have told you already, that there are ways above this world of keeping us up in our troubles, and repairing us when we are wearing out; but I know 'tis my duty to *do* all I can, and to use whatever means I have; and so I pray and work too."

"What kind of things do you do?" asked Jack Thatch; who, although he understood by this time, how the body was to be kept in repair, could not, for the life of him, imagine how this desirable result was to be obtained in the matter of the temper.

"Well," answered the cobbler, "sometimes I gather all the children, and have them out in the garden for a play, and leave Mrs. Flicker the house all to herself. Believe me, 'tis very soothing to have a little quiet now and again, and be able to move about without looking to see that you don't tread on some one. I always find her the better for that. And I generally manage so as to have five or six shillings in my pocket, for an occasion, whenever one comes; and though we can't go for change of air for long together, as gentlefolk do, still we can have a little turn now and again; and I take her off with me for a jaunt. Sometimes we go by rail, and sometimes in one of the neighbor's spring carts; but, however we go, I always find she's the better of it for weeks after she comes back. In my opinion, Jack, we're all likely to become seedy if we don't get a little change from time to time; it gives one something new to think about; and it gets rid of a

great many gloomy thoughts that the mind is likely to brood upon; and it gives one a general stir-up; and without being able exactly to explain what this is, it means a good deal. It seems to me that all the little troubles of life keep gathering, gathering, until they come to a head, and they must then be got rid of somehow; and we find that the fresh air often blows them away.

"Then, about that little present that you saw me make Mrs. Flicker, or at any rate that you heard, when the sovereign fell smack into her hand: 'twas but a trifle, still it showed her that I had been thinking of her; and women like well to be thought about. And now, Jack Thatch, if you take my advice, you'll do as I do, and set about repairing Mrs. Thatch a bit. Poor woman! to see her old, broken shoes, and battered bonnet, and ragged gown, she needs much. And never you mind if you can't do it a great deal all at once; just do a little at a time; only, begin at once, — that's the great thing. And if you begin repairing her, you'll see she'll go on repairing herself; for she'll get new heart and spirit; and when there are two of you at it, depend upon it, it will get on much faster than you think. Just look at those boots," said the cobbler, pointing with professional pride at the shining coverings of Jack Thatch's legs; "how could you walk about in those boots, and see her slipshod, and the children out at the toes? Remember, you are all a part of the

same premises; and all must be kept in order together."

"But it will come uncommon hard upon a man,' said Jack Thatch, "to keep wife and children, too, in order. If I keep the woman, the woman ought to keep the children."

"That's just a part of the selfishness," said the cobbler, "that there's a deal too much of in the world. Don't the children belong to you both? Ain't one of you the father of them, and the other the mother? ain't some of them like you, and some of them like her, and some of them like both of you together? and how can you make out that you have nothing to do with the children?"

"Well, Joe Flicker, I feel uncommon as though I should like to be cross with you, but I can't: I'll try the wife, but I won't promise the children; and even if I wished, 'twould be no good, for I never knew what to do with them in my life."

"I'll tell you what to do," answered the cobbler; "you set about repairing them in their bodies, as quick as you can. You spend your money on warm clothes for them; and get their boots and shoes mended up; and buy them new ones as soon as you can; and that will repair them outside. Then get them good bread and milk for their meals, and a bit of meat when you can; and that will repair their inside; and 'tis sorely they want it, if I know aright. And then, give them a penny toy now and again; a

penny ain't much to spend on one's young family; and be with them for a minute or two when you can spare the time, and tumble them about; and never mind letting them give you a tumble, too. Make a tumble for yourself, Jack, if they can't make it for you; and then laugh as loud as you can; or, if that don't suit you, why, pretend to cry; that'll do as well; and then they'll come to make you well; and they'll be twice as fond of you; and you don't know how fond you'll get of them. Yes, Jack, though you're a great big fellow, you'll be ready to cry if any thing is the matter with them. Then, man, your children will love you; and they'll obey you from love, and your wife won't have half the trouble with them; and, as I've just now said, you'll all be in repair together; and a very nice family you'll be."

Whether Jack Thatch saw any visions of brightness in the brilliant boots which glittered upon his feet, or no, we cannot tell: but some such vision certainly passed before him; for, after a long pause, he said, "A very nice family we'll be: yes! we'll all be in repair together; and a very nice family we'll be." So saying, Mr. Thatch rose from his seat, drew down his trousers over his boots, cast a look of ineffable scorn at his old slippers, stretched out his hand to the cobbler, and, without more ado, marched out of the little shop, with the air of a man

that was well set up on his legs, and didn't mean to trip for any one.

. . . . . .

From time to time, the cobbler heard intelligence of the private life of his cousin: and every thing seemed to promise that he, and his house, and household, together with their tempers, and boots and shoes, and clothes, and all belonging to them, would soon be very different from what they had been for many a long day. For, to Jack Thatch's credit, it must be told, that he set about all these needful repairs at once. He had a Book like Joe Flicker's, and he took to reading it; and he had knees like Joe's, and he took to using them; and he had a head like the cobbler's, with brains inside, and he began to use it, too; and he found, that by reading and thinking and praying, and then manfully setting to work, an immense deal could be done. Jack's wife was a sensible woman, that didn't talk too much; and, though she greatly wondered, she allowed herself to be repaired, and never said a word about the past. Only at times she felt her heart swelling within her; not as though it would burst, and let out the deep, dark waters which once had been within, but as if it were full of all sorts of cordials that ever had been made, together with sunshine and mountain air, and laughing-gas, and happiness, and singing, and a hodge-podge of delight fizzing and

sparkling and popping, and shooting the cork clean out of her heart; altogether unlike any thing she had ever felt since she was a child.

And when the good woman's heart thus swelled, and she could contain herself no longer, she used to sing out, and praise the One who had looked at her poor husband on his knees, and taught him out of the Book, and put good thoughts into his head, and given him the heart to carry them out. And, at times, she would go to her room, and shut herself in, and while she was there one day, Jack was listening at the door; and without saying a word, he walked in, and knelt down by her side. And neither of them said any thing, though they both tried; and they got up off their knees, and looked at each other, and those looks explained all; and they never had much talk about what had passed; for their eyes had tongues: yes; and though they couldn't say a word on their knees, their hearts had tongues; and as once they had knelt together, they seemed to feel as though they could henceforth go well through life together, — and so they did.

And under Joe Flicker's directions, and with his helping advice, Jack Thatch started even still more extensively in the repairing line, than he had thought of at first. For, when in the course of a little time, he came to order a new pair of boots for the winter, for his wife, and six pairs for his six children, he and Joe had another conversation, of which, though it

produced further great results, we can now give only the sum.

Jack Thatch told the cobbler all he went through in his efforts to repair himself, his wife and children, his house, and all he had. He owned, like an honest man, what he felt: that he never could have succeeded if he had not sought help above his own. And he gave his experiences also of his efforts with the various children, for whom he now came to get a supply of boots. "I tried the laughing," said Jack, "and it did with all but little Sophy; you know she's delicate, and she was very shy of me; for 'twas so strange to see me with her brothers and sisters at all. But when the baby tumbled me down, and I began to cry, poor little Sophy couldn't stand that, and keep on her stool any longer; so she crept over to me, and kissed me, and wiped my eyes with her little ragged frock; and ever since that we've been like father and child; and to come to an end, we're all as happy as a family can be. To be sure," said Jack, "'twas rather queer to be knocked down by one's own baby, and to feel it crawling all over one like an earwig, but I got used to it very soon; and 'tis a very cheap way of making a friend."

"Now, Jack," said the cobbler, "you must go on and do still more in this repairing line. You must keep your business in repair, by watching every little thing. Never let a customer be dissatisfied, or have

a wrong impression of any thing, or be disobliged; keep always repairing your stock; keep your customers' good opinion of you in repair; never mind trouble: no, not even a little loss, if it is to do a stroke of repairs; remember, that nothing will *keep* right in this world; it must be *kept* right; and you'll have to be at this work as long as ever you live. And do for your neighbors what you do for yourself. Never pass by a chance of putting them into repair, when you get an opportunity of doing so. If you see a poor neighbor in want, hold out your hand to him; give him a bit of what you can spare. And if you see a poor fellow down-hearted, or down-trodden, give him a kind word. Or if you see a poor, foolish fellow going wrong, put him in the right way; and teach him the secret of the Book, the knees, and the head. Yes; and if you see neighbors quarrelling, set them right; perhaps ten minutes' kindly talk will do it, and repair what otherwise may come to ruin altogether. If we do this, Jack, we shall not have lived for nothing. We may be poor, and not have the chance of doing any great thing; or if we get the chance, perhaps we couldn't do it; but our business is to try, and do what lies in our power; and 'tis for that we shall have to give our account by and by."

Thus did Jack Thatch. And he and the cobbler became fast friends; and though Jack became known as a prosperous tradesman, and a happy

family man, and a man who was respectable and respected, that which he took most pleasure in, himself, was the thought that he was

"THE MAN WHO KEPT HIMSELF IN REPAIR."

Good reader, you have now come to the end of the story of Jack Thatch; and you have seen how from having been a dilapidated, wretched, good-for-nothing creature, he became a decent, happy, useful man. The writer hopes that you have been interested, and, perhaps, entertained; but he has a further hope, and that is, that you may be profited also. For the end of all reading should be profit.

Hence, permit yourself to be asked, whether there be not some points in which you also are out of repair; and not altogether as your best friends, or, perhaps, as even you yourself, on reflection, think you ought to be.

And if, even at the first consideration of this question, you do not see any thing particularly amiss, just take a walk round yourself, and inspect your various ways and habits, both as regards your fellow-men, and your own daily life. And it may be that the inspector will report that there are many little holes which want filling; some rust which should be cleaned off; some pipes which should be unstopped; some parts of your premises which need a repairing hand.

There are holes through which evil reports get into your brain; stop them up. There is a door which should be generally kept shut, which swings open too easily, and lets out unkind words; get a new lock, and put it on, and keep them in. There are fireplaces which won't draw, for the chimneys want sweeping; and so you are cold in yourself, and cold to your neighbors; get rid of whatever is hindering warmth and love, and be comfortable yourself, and make others so, by a glowing, cheery, sparkling heart. And keep from looking dingy and damp; and train up a few flowering creepers on the walls of your outward life, so as to remind men of freshness and beauty, cheering the hearts of those who pass by, blessing all who see you, even though they know but little of your real inner self. For pleasant smiles and words and looks are good garnishing for solid worth; and it may be that others will be won to what is lovely and of good report; and you in your own sphere will teach many to follow the example of

"THE MAN WHO KEPT HIMSELF IN REPAIR."

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THE MOTHER AND HER BOYS.

BY

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THE MOTHER AND HER BOYS.

The mother's one absorbing idea and desire, when a man-child is given to her, is that he may grow up to be a good man, that the world may be a little better for his manhood. I do not think a mother can do much to help the boy to become a good, useful man, unless she has this feeling from the beginning. Miss Edgeworth, in one of her stories, makes a mother say, "All boys are naturally little bears." While not able entirely to indorse this idea, I am free to confess there is some truth in it! But there is also another truth, beautifully put by Mrs. Barbauld, when she says, "Reverence in the infant the future man; in man the rudiments of the angel." Reverence — that is the thing we want. Love, in the mother, comes by nature; but this mere natural love, if unaccompanied by reverence and a thought for the future, is just as likely to lead her wrong as right. About the year 1492, in a little village in Germany, there was a schoolmaster, by name John

Trebonius, who had a curious habit of always raising his cap to salute his pupils when he entered the school-room. When some one expressed astonishment, he said: "There are, among these boys, men of whom God will one day make burgomasters, chancellors, doctors, magistrates. Although you do not see them with the badges of their dignity, it is right that we should treat them with respect." One of those little boys was a certain Martin Luther! I do not know that we could have a better illustration of the importance of our subject, and the spirit in which it should be regarded. It is, at least in all the early part, especially a mother's subject. At the same time, a complete man cannot be made without the help of the father; it takes both a good man and a good woman to train up a youth. I think that boys are often injured, sometimes almost ruined, by the mother absorbing too exclusively the confidence of her lads. More and more, as the lad grows up, he needs the influence and companionship of a good man. At the same time, in the earliest years, the chief influence does rest with the mother.

"We hardly know," says Dr. Martineau, "how soon the child once born in the image of God becomes twisted into our likeness, and spoiled by the contagion of our selfishness." I think we may take as especially concerning the mother the

period of life from infancy to the age of ten or twelve, when the boy is beginning to pass out into the wider influences of the world.

Passing on, then, to some of the main elements required in the building up of character, I must put first of all *Self-Control.* This seems to me the main line, which will run all through the life. I feel it to be of such importance, that I believe a child taught to exercise self-control, though not taught to read and write, will have a better chance of making a good man than one taught any quantity of learning without self-control. It is said of John Wesley's mother, that she whipped him when a baby in order to teach him to cry softly. Mrs. Wesley was a wise woman; she rightly estimated the value of this habit of self-control, and thought she could not begin with it too soon; though I cannot quite agree with her plan, and think that if a little more of the "patience of love" had tempered her firmness, John Wesley might have been even a better man than he was. But I would not let a child cry *ad libitum;* I would not let it eat *ad libitum.* The essential principle in teaching self-control is to begin with the mother's exercising quiet, firm control, and gradually relaxing it as reason and affection can be brought to bear upon the child, and he can be induced to exercise the same control over himself. It is not by any set lessons, so much as by the

opportunities which keep occurring in the daily life of the family.

It is harder work to teach a boy who is alone with his mother than one growing up with brothers and sisters. It is a misfortune to be an only child; and I am inclined to think the advantages to the growth of character increase, rather than diminish, by the child being one of a large family.

In the teaching of self-control, it is very essential that the mother shall have firm control over herself. She wants self-control in not giving way to her child. A mother's love is so great and so unselfish that I am sure if mothers could only be brought to feel the importance of restraining their own pleasure in the delight of their children, and would look further ahead, they would make many more sacrifices than they do. It is so hard to say "no;" it is so easy to say "yes," especially if we gain a little present relief, as well as the child a present pleasure. Restless caprice is almost one of the first trials of childhood, and motherhood, too; but it opens the door for endless little lessons in self-control and order. Take an illustration from a little child playing: first, the child wants his blocks; plays with them only a few minutes, perhaps does not play with them at all, but, as soon as they are fairly out on the floor, wants something else. Now it is a ball; then nothing will satisfy him but a pencil and slate;

and meanwhile all the other toys are left scattered about. The easiest plan for the mother, at the moment, is to let him go on in this way, and then put them away herself by and by. But the mother who looks to the future of her boy will not do so. Here is one of the opportunities of teaching self-control. But how? Not by merely telling the child he must keep to the blocks, and that he shall have nothing else; but by the mother herself trying to interest him in them, showing him perhaps some new thing to build, and in any case teaching him that they must be put orderly by, even though she has to assist him in doing this. All this of course takes trouble, but such moral lessons can no more be given without trouble than a writing or a reading lesson.

One element in self-control is letting children feel the consequences of their acts. The older idea of rewards and punishments was arbitrary. Luther said, "The apple should be placed beside the rod." But nowadays we see that a wiser kind of retribution may constantly be brought out of the very right or wrong-doing itself, without either apple or rod. For instance, a child will linger or dawdle over dressing, he is not ready for the drive or walk, — let him stay at home. He refuses to have his hands and face washed for dinner, — let him dine alone; he must not come to table. Weak parents, however, rather try to

shield their children from consequences; but every time they do so they lose one of Nature's opportunities. One thing especially may be spoken of here, — the way in which a thoughtful mother may see the points at which heredity has caused some natural weakness or over-development, and do her part in the evolution of something better. The doctrine of evolution is all right, as long as we bear in mind how much of it we have in our own power. That first great desire of the mother's heart, that her boy should grow up a good man, if only kept steadily before her, will help her very much, and she will not feel anything too trifling or too small that shall be necessary from the very beginning to build up character.

Next to self-control I would place *Truthfulness and Honesty.* At the outset I think it should be said that truthfulness is learned much later than people generally suppose. I used to think it was one of the first things to be taught; nay, that untruthfulness was a wickedness which no child properly taught by parents not believing in original sin would be guilty of. So when my first child, soon after he had learned to talk, told me an untruth, I cried very bitterly. Truthfulness *is* one of the *first* lessons to be taught, only we must not expect too much. A great deal of what is too apt to be taken for untruthfulness in a child is mere play of imagination, a sort of ideal-

izing and painting, which comes very early to some children. It is the duty and responsibility of *accuracy* which must be taught; and a great deal may be done in this way whilst the lad is a mere child. "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "if your boy tells you that he looked out of that window when he looked out of the other, whip him!" We may differ with the doctor, perhaps, as to the way of punishing the boy, but there is no doubt that inaccuracy should not be overlooked in a child. We are constantly seeing such shocking examples of untruthfulness and exaggeration, both in private gossip and in the newspapers, that one cannot help wondering whether, if the good doctor's plan had been put into practice all round, society might not be blessed with more truthful members. One cannot too soon teach a child to use its conscience in these matters. If the mother will only train her boy early in this matter of accuracy, the larger influences to truth and honesty will follow naturally enough.

Then, as the third matter, I would place *Unselfishness*. This is a quality especially to be taught to *boys*. A feeling seems to grow up about a lad that he is the powerful one in life, has got to do the hard work, and so must be excused a good deal and more indulged, and let off a good deal from small service. I think there is nothing the child learns sooner than selfishness, and often

mothers help their children to be selfish. Thus, very unselfish mothers often have the most selfish boys. And here I wish to say very earnestly, if you want your boy to grow up without overmuch *thinking* of himself, do not let him *talk* much about himself, and do not talk about him to others when he is present. Parents are far too careless about this. Do not let your children see your callers so much as is the custom, nor bring them forward purposely to be seen and spoken to. Before a child can understand your words, he can tell that you are drawing attention to himself; then it is not long before every word you speak about him is understood. So he finds out that he is a person of some importance, and very soon he gets to feel that it is only right and proper that he should be talked about and considered. Thus your first seeds of selfishness are sown in him! Again, remember that some children are naturally more generous than others; they do not show any propensity for hoarding or possessing things, to have them "for their very, very own," and they willingly part with them. A mother is apt to call this "generosity," and plumes herself upon the idea that her child is unselfish. But there is all the difference in the world between this sort of generosity and real unselfishness. Your "generous boy" gives *one* apple when he has *two;* or a toy he does not want, when he knows he has

another new and handsome one in sight. This is not unnatural or to be censured, but don't allow yourself or him to imagine that he has done an *unselfish* thing, and don't praise him for it; let it pass with as little notice as possible. Such generosity is often only a form of self-gratification. Thus I heard one of your easy-going, generous men, one of the most ready at off-hand giving, talking to a friend about the hard times and the need for economizing; "But," said he, "men don't like to give up anything as long as they can get it; and, by jingo, *I'll* have all *I* want!" The truer spirit is that of the poor little girl, who, in like hard times during the Lancashire cotton famine, was seen one wintry day barely clad, but happy in the possession of an old shawl, which she offered to share with her little companion, saying, "Come under, *I can stretch it a bit!*" The true test of unselfishness for all, is not what we give, but what we *give up*.

Fourthly, I would place *Patriotism*. A mother can do much to train her boy to be a good citizen. How can a boy have an inborn love of his country, if his father and mother show no interest and no enthusiasm about its history, and its laws, and its good government? I think that if the mother has it in her heart to make her boy some day faithfully do his part for his city or his country, she will begin in good time, teaching him all she can

about it; making him love and respect the names of its best public men who have served it well in times past; taking an interest herself, and teaching him to take interest, in the events of the day. What better way of carrying out the lessons of unselfishness in the home to unselfishness applied to patriotism? We read of older times when mothers inspired their sons, even when quite little boys, with the ambition to save their country from its foes; the boy longing for the time when he should be able to bear arms with his elders. Has our country no longer need of young men fired with as holy a zeal for her welfare, even though it has to be shown in more commonplace ways? Shall mothers no longer be ambitious that their sons when they grow up shall manfully put their hands to the work that is still to be done by true, honest, and fearless citizens? If some of the women who write and lecture, pleading for woman's suffrage, would only spend the same time in teaching their sons the duties and responsibilities of citizens, and their daughters by precept and example to do the same for the next generation of boys, it would not be long before our cities were better places than they are; even in political matters, the earliest influence is the strongest! I met the other day with an earnest, high principled Republican. I found he was one of a family of eight sons; his father had been a Democrat, his

mother a Republican. I asked with curiosity how many of the sons grew up Democrats. *Only one out of the eight!* Children begin very early indeed to take party sides. As soon as they do *that*, they can be trained to look at the matter from a higher standard. Of course they will at first be likely to feel that the side their parents take is the right one, but do all you can to help them to look from the point of principle and not of party. Here the father's help will come in, in teaching and interesting them, and simplifying to them what is interesting him in city politics or the affairs of the world, and explaining this new scheme and that new enterprise or expedition. I have seen a father bring out a surprising store of geographical and historical knowledge when sitting, on a Sunday afternoon, with a good illustrated weekly paper, and two or three little lads hanging on the arm of his chair and on his knee. Now it was the launching of some great ship, now some wonderful new piece of machinery that was illustrated. Now it was some hunting scene in India, or an incident in a war going on in Europe, or the history of the changes in governments and exchanges of territory. This father was not a professional man, had not the slightest pretensions to being a great reader; but he brought out and simplified to his boys the newspaper reading of the day's events all over the world, and such knowledge of

its past history as came within his own memory. He did not attempt to go far back into the past, but forty or fifty years even of his knowledge was very ancient and very useful history for his little boys. All this was an education in itself, — an education in unselfish interest in the life of peoples and countries, and altogether in the life and work of others. I have not seen this family of little boys since they became young men; but I feel pretty certain that when I do come across them, I shall find them working for their city and never shirking public duty, some of them perhaps, in time, members of parliament or magistrates, and this not for the sake of office or pay.

Important, however, as all these qualities I have spoken of are, I cannot regard a mother as having fulfilled her part unless she has done something to bring out that which is the crowning element in character, — I mean *Religion.*

Here again we have to go back, as in self-control, to that idea that she herself must *guide* at first, and so gradually develop in the child the power of *self-guidance.* At first the child cannot conceive of any power or care greater than its parents'. He does not see the necessity of asking for the care of a Heavenly Father.

It is not dependence that is first taught, but wonder and reverence. This is the most natural order of development. The child-mind seems

peculiarly fitted to receive and enjoy impressions of wonder and reverence. Without set lessons or taxing the memory, gradually the mind is led on from the wonder and beauty in Nature, in the stars and flowers and insects, in sunshine and storms, — on to something greater than these, to something greater and more powerful than father or mother, some being on whom *they* in turn depend. There is something in the very nature of children that readily receives the belief in a very real relation between a Supreme Being and themselves, long before they can have any set instruction from the Bible. The religious nature, which I believe to be as natural as any other element of mind, may and should be developed at first *without Bible or Testament.* Afterwards all the helps from devout, religious, God-loving men and women in all ages, and even of all nations, will be recognized and valued. But the whole, to be firm and permanent, must be based upon an *inward, gradually developed* consciousness, which will be independent of creeds or doctrines or evidences, and which, if once it is naturally brought out, cannot be utterly swept away by the tempest of scepticism and unbelief by which it will at times be assailed. So much a mother owes to her child, so much I believe its nature demands and is adapted to receive. I should not like to close, however, without a word about teaching little

children to pray. I think it is a good thing for the mother to write a simple little prayer for her children to learn by heart; not, however, as something to be kept rigidly to: the child should be encouraged himself to add something to it in his own way, on special occasions of thankfulness or trouble. And, especially with boys, I would do everything I could to help and encourage them to overcome their dislike to kneeling down before getting into bed when amongst strange boys or when away from home. I do not believe that boys are naturally less religious than girls, but I do think that they are more afraid of being laughed at; and, more than all, they fear being thought soft or emotional, and they think it looks so if they say their prayers regularly as little boys and girls do at home. Teach them that this fear is a weakness in itself, and shows a lack of the highest courage that a man can wish for, — moral courage. In this, however, as in all other matters I have spoken of, I do not attempt to lay down any detailed rules, but only to show the spirit and direction of these early efforts, which rest so entirely upon the mother, and which really give the bias to the whole after-education.

In close connection with this religious teaching at home, is the matter of taking little children to church. I do not need to say anything about the Sunday-school, because children are generally

ready enough for that; but I do not think that any Sunday-school can take the place of the church, any more than the Sunday-school teacher can relieve the mother of her own responsibility for religious training at home. Every mother who believes in public worship, and feels the benefit of it herself, would like her boys to grow up good church-goers and church-supporters. If they are to do this, she must begin early to take them with her. I think from five years old children may begin to go occasionally as a treat; and by the time they are seven or eight, church-going should have come to be looked upon as one of the regular institutions of the family, — a matter of course as much as regularity at meals or bed-time. To form this regular church-going habit while children are young, requires great tact and patience, and a mother has to exercise her unselfishness as much here as elsewhere. She will not, perhaps, be able to keep her whole attention on the service, or feel the time so restful to herself as if the children were all left at home with a servant; but I never see a mother at church, Sunday after Sunday, without her children, without wondering rather sadly how they are spending the Sunday morning. There is not much trouble at first. Children love to do what they see their parents and all grown-up people do, and to be with them. For the first few times, the novelty and serious-

ness may awe them, and they will very likely behave very well; but as this wears off, and they feel more at home in the pew, they will be apt to grow restless and talkative. Watchfulness and tact, however, will do a great deal in keeping them quiet. Let the little one have a book, or a pencil and scrap of paper; this, with a good nap, will help along the sermon. Many a time I have listened to the sermon with a little child leaning up against me on each side. But even from the beginning there are some things the children can enter into. There is always the singing; and they like to look over the hymn with father or mother long before they can read, and gradually they find that they know some of the words. Later on, again, if they are encouraged to listen, they will startle you some Sunday by saying, as one of my little boys did, "Mother, I do believe I understood a little bit of the sermon to-day." Insist upon one thing only, — no talking, perfect silence and quietness; this one lesson in self-control will be as good as a sermon. As soon as a child knows that quietness has to be, it is wonderful how much it will find to interest both eyes and ears. Children are very quick observers: they will soon notice when parents and older people who are about them are reverent in their behavior. When they see that they join devoutly in prayer and hymn, they will have impressions

made upon them which they will carry with them all through their lives; they will begin to have some realization of what is meant by religion, and by worshipping in "spirit and in truth."

I cannot better close what I have to say than in the following wise words of John Locke: "The business of education, in respect of knowledge, is not to perfect a learner in all or any one of the sciences, but to give his mind that disposition and those habits that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge he shall stand in need of in the future course of his life."

I have thought it might be helpful to some mothers if I should add two passages from Mrs. Barbauld's "Hymns in Prose" which I have often read to children and found that they liked. Along with them I have ventured to put two very simple prayers, such as any mother might teach her children to say.

HANNAH HERFORD.

When the darkness is passed away, and the beams of the morning sun strike through your eyelids, begin the day with praising God, who hath taken care of you through the night. Flowers, when you open again, spread your leaves, and smell sweet to His praise. Birds, when you awake, warble your thanks amongst the green boughs. Sing to Him before you sing to your mates. Let His praise be in our hearts when we lie down; let His praise be on our lips when we awake. — *Mrs. Barbauld.*

MORNING PRAYER FOR A CHILD.

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for this new day. Now may I try to please Thee to-day. Help me to be obedient to my father and mother, and very kind to every one around me. Help me to speak the truth, and in everything to do my best. May I feel thankful to Thee for everything that makes me happy, and remember that Thy love and care are over all Thy children everywhere. Amen.

As the mother moveth about the house with her finger on her lips, and stilleth every little noise, that her infant be not disturbed; as she draweth the curtains around its bed, and shutteth out the light from its eyes; so God draweth the curtains of darkness around us; so He maketh all things to be hushed and still, that His large family may sleep in peace. — *Mrs. Barbauld.*

EVENING PRAYER FOR A CHILD.

Heavenly Father, bless me, and take care of me this night, and give me quiet sleep. Forgive all that I have done wrong this day, and help me as I grow older to try more and more to please Thee. Bless my dear father and mother [*and brothers and sisters*]. *May we be a happy family on earth, and at last a happy family in heaven.* AMEN.

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LIVING IN THE UPPER STORIES.

Friend, go up higher. — Luke xiv. 10.

People very commonly have rooms in their houses which they never occupy. As you drive through the country in winter, you see a light shining out, now here, now there. And very often, on the score of economy, of habit or taste, it is evident that the whole family lives in the kitchen, — all the rest of the house is dark. Here and there, one has gotten out of the kitchen into the sitting-room. And now and then they have made and have come to feel at home in a library.

These different stories, upper and lower, in his habitations may be taken roughly to represent the fact that man himself is a structure of stories, upper and lower. The kitchen is a necessary part of every home. No work in it has about it any necessary touch of degradation or disgrace. Indeed, unless its work be properly performed,

the higher functions of the home, that depend on the food supply by which they live and do their work, must inevitably suffer. No sitting-room or parlor or library can long fulfil its ideal, unless the kitchen be properly thought of and cared for. And yet the man who is content to have only a kitchen, and live in it all the time, is hardly up to the standard of our highest thought. So we have no word of fault to find with the lower stories of human nature, in themselves considered. He who despises or neglects them will suffer in the higher. But he who furnishes and lives in only the lower stories of his nature misses the best of his life, and never completely knows what it is to be a man.

To make our thought a little clearer, let us glance from the foundation upward over some of these stories of human life.

There are thousands of men in Boston, and all over the world, who lead a merely animal life. I need not picture such lives; you know what they are. Lust, drink, game, — these words sufficiently indicate it. They are persons who are said to "know life." They know the smallest fragment, and the worst side of it. They are called persons of "pleasure." They have such pleasure as swine know in the mire, or as asses find in eating thistles. They are devoted to the grosser appetites of the body.

A little above these are such persons as find the sole end of their existence in what is called "fashionable society." Now, you know I have no word to say against true society life or sensible fashions. But these people care for nothing else but balls, parties, theatres, and a round of amusements. They live for no purpose. They are butterflies, or millinery advertisements.

Then about on the same level is the purely selfish business man. He labors only to make money, or because the excitement has become so habitual that it is now a necessity of his existence. Against money, or money-making in any honest way, you know I have not one word of complaint. But simply getting it, for no high purpose, is not a very exalted aim in life. He who collects bric-à-brac, or even old junk, is doing as worthy work as he who collects money, if that is all.

A story above this is the affectional life. This is the region of family and friendship loves. The man who lives here is rarely gross, and he tastes some of the sweetest joys of life. He who, with health, has a true wife, a dutiful child, and a true friend, may laugh adversity to scorn and defy the world. But, taking all these with him, one may go higher yet. These may be possessed and enjoyed by one to whom knowledge is only a name and the world's alluring mystery a blank.

To be all a man may and ought, he should

climb up the stairway, and occupy and furnish the chambers of his brain. The word *man* means *to think*, and he who does not learn to think can hardly be called a man.

But the moral, the ranges of truth and right and duty, are higher even than mere intellect. Not that they can be separated, for all true and just morality must be based on a true knowledge of facts and human relationships; but character is nobler than knowing.

Above all, crowning the whole structure of humanity, is the crystal dome of spirit. Here is the observatory, open to all sides of the wide, round heaven, from which are visible the eternal stars of the divine firmament, which is the visible garment of the invisible God. Here he comes face to face with a Being to be adored. It is the realm of beauty, affection, aspiration. The dignity and grandeur of life are seen, hope finds her wings, and man inhabits eternity.

These hints may be taken to indicate the stories in the structure of human life. My purpose is only to suggest to you some reasons why you should habituate yourselves to living *upstairs*. You should listen to the voice that says to you, "*Friend, go up higher*," because —

I. This is the way to be happy.

We instinctively seek happiness, and it is a perfectly proper object of search. You may even

take it as a gauge of your manner of living. If you are not happy, something is wrong. The natural faculties used naturally will produce happiness, as surely as the wind playing across the strings of an Æolian harp will produce music. If not happy, then the strings are out of tune. Of course, this does not mean that you shall never be ill, never lose property or friend, never suffer. Real happiness is consistent with and superior to all these. Have you never seen the face of a sufferer gleam with joy? Even the martyr's eyes may glisten with a deep brightness that persecution cannot cloud any more than evening mists can blot out the stars.

You may seek happiness, then, only not at the cost of others or of any right and noble principle. And the *way* to find it is by climbing into the upper stories of life. Note, in the first place, that the higher the faculty, the higher the pleasure. Pleasure is only the satisfaction of natural desires. So, of course, the higher the hunger, the higher the satisfaction. The higher the rank and the more complicated the structure of a musical instrument, the higher and sweeter the music. They range all the way from the boy's willow whistle that he makes with his jack-knife in spring, through flute and harp, to piano and cathedral organ. The man who simply plays upon his lower, physical faculties, ranks only with the brute

who shares his pleasures with him. Only as he goes up higher, through love and knowledge and duty and truth, does he come to look on the face and enter into the blessedness of God. To do a good deed, to help some one, to discover a new truth as an astronomer discovers a new planet, — these are joys that neither the brute nor the brute-man ever tastes or can even understand. The "man of pleasure," as he is falsely called, does not know what pleasure means. As well call the boy with his whistle the musician, and forget Beethoven. It is only the gluttony and drunkenness of the basement; while sitting-room, parlor, library, and observatory rise above him, into which he has never entered. Life, in its true and broad sense, is to him an unknown land, up whose rivers he has never sailed, on whose slopes he has never walked, whose birds have never sung to him, and from whose mountain-tops he has never gazed.

And, then, the lower, the basement pleasures of life, being gross and selfish, bring surfeit and shame, and always leave a sting and sense of degradation behind, so that, when the mercantile balance is made out, the loss more than balances the gain.

Then these lower pleasures are brief and evanescent. No wise man will invest his wealth in clouds or morning dew, that evaporate and flit

away while you look at or as you try to grasp them. It is of the very nature of the higher things of life to abide. They last as long as life itself, and can be taken away only when the soul itself can be annihilated.

Thus he who sensibly seeks only pleasure will leave the swine in their sty and the cattle in their stalls, will leave the kitchen of only food and drink, will leave the dressing-room that knows only of garments and ribbons and adornments, and will climb up into the higher stories, where are gathered friends to love and books to read, and where are high and noble duties to perform, and from whose upper windows he can look out into the blue glory, and see the eternal stars of God's great heaven.

II. Once more, only as a person ascends can he gain any wide outlook, and so have any just estimate of the relations, proportions, and values of things.

A boy cannot understand a man; for he has never been up into the heights of manhood. But a man can understand a boy; for he has passed through it, and so includes boyhood in his present self. An ignorant man cannot understand an educated one; but the educated can understand the ignorant, for the ignorance he has passed through, leaving it behind and below him. One who has always lived in a little, narrow valley may come to think his door-yard the whole world.

But he who climbs the mountain does not lose the valley: he only sees its true size, importance, and relative value as compared with the great horizon. This, I think, is what Paul means when he says, "The natural — the fleshly, animal — man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." "He that is spiritual discerneth all things." That is, the man who lives in the upper ranges of his nature comprehends all beneath him; but he who lives in the lower cannot possibly know the higher, — "they are foolishness unto him." To a fool the philosopher is a fool. So to the man who lives in the basement of his being all the higher stories are only dreams or folly; while he who has gone higher knows that only the contented dweller below is the fool, knowing nothing of what he slights and despises.

Now, this is no unpractical thing. It takes firm grip of your daily lives. You must live in the upper stories of life, in order to know what things are worth, and give each thing its relative importance. Let me tell you just what I mean. The wild Indian — Sioux or Cheyenne — struts about in his beads and colored rags; while you look on and laugh at his conceited ignorance and folly. His finery is worth nothing to you; but it is worth *to him* as much as the things you value are *to you*. And your finery is only foolish tinsel to one who

has learned to prize something better. Just this is what Agassiz meant. He could not "stop to make money," which to you perhaps is everything, any more than you would stop for the Indian's beads or feathers. The beads, feathers, and money are all well enough in their place; only you put a false estimate on them, if you have not learned to know that other things are of unspeakably greater worth. When in a valley, the valley is all there is of the world. Put a copper cent before your eye, and the cent is bigger than a mountain, and will even hide a star that is a million times greater than the whole earth. It can shut out the whole heaven.

If, then, the man never goes higher than his kitchen, the kitchen is everything to him. But he who knows and is at home in parlor, library, and observatory, is able to estimate correctly their relative values. He does not lose the kitchen: he only puts it in its proper place. He who lives in the basement owns only the basement; but he who lives in the upper stories owns the whole house.

And, then, the man who lives in the upper ranges of the universe is able to estimate his own sorrows and disappointments, and so is not overwhelmed by them. Perhaps there is as much danger of our being selfish in our sorrows and losses as in our pleasures and gains. Take one

who lives only for himself. When he loses, when he weeps, when his heart aches, he thinks none ever lost or wept and was pained like him. So he loses courage and trust, and thinks the whole universe is out of order. But let him "go up higher" where he can overlook the world, and he learns that loss and tears and pain are the common lot of man. And so, instead of selfishly nursing his own sorrow, he will be moved to go out and help some other lonely and wandering soul; and thus, as he enters into divine labor, he will enter on the divine rest. How often is it, in this wilderness of want and trouble, that you will see a man or woman simply sit down and brood over a disappointment, listening to their own complaint, until they have no ears left to hear the cries of the great world of humanity in its struggle and travail! Climb to the upper stories, then, and look out through your tears, and see what throngs there are whose burden is heavier than yours.

And then, unless you go up where you can look abroad over the world, you almost inevitably come to be a hobby-rider. Your business, your schemes, your pet projects and plans, your way of helping reform the world, come to be everything, and others nothing. So you get out of sympathy with the movements of the great world outside your own little sphere. You come to depreciate, because you misunderstand, the efforts

of others as honest as yourself. So you get soured and disappointed. You remember the prophet Elijah in the wilderness, under the juniper-tree. He thought he was all alone, and the universe going to wreck, because he was so absorbed in himself that he had not learned that God had any other true worshipper or mankind any other friend. If we set our whole heart on saving the world only through our little plans, then, when they miscarry, we lose faith in God and get out of sympathy with man.

Go up high enough where you can see. There are farmers who know nothing but oxen and crops, and doctors who know nothing but diseases, and lawyers who know nothing but briefs, and merchants who know only teas or silks, and ministers who know only theology. Go up where you can see. Then, if your own affairs do fail, you will know that the stars still shine and that God still lives.

III. And, once more, only he who lives in the upper stories can do much towards lifting up the world.

Man's life is worth little only as he so lives that he helps others. The names of those that mankind remembers with gratitude and love are the helpers. They who stand crowned on the summits of the past are the ones who have inspired and lifted mankind. If you are doing nothing for

others, you might sink on the surface of the stream of time, and beyond your own immediate circle there would not be a ripple. About all the good that large masses of people do is to help swell the census list. They add to the world's sum of values no more than one more fly adds to a June day. But if, in the smallest way, you are trying to help somebody, then you have become a co-worker with God, and are a part of the infinite worth of the universe.

But how help others? You help as you lift somebody higher. But no man ever heartily tries to help towards what he does not himself know or appreciate. You do not invite a friend to a hill-top for the view, unless you care for beauty and know it is there. So of painting or music, so of poetry or literature of any kind, so of goodness or benevolence, so of religion. Only as you know or appreciate these things do you care enough about them to help others towards their attainment.

And, then, your advice is worth nothing without your example. Suppose you praise the view from the top of Bunker Hill Monument, and advise everybody to go up, and see how fine it is. Some one asks you if you have ever been, and you say, No, and confess you do not intend to. How highly will people estimate your advice? This is the weak point in much family teaching.

Fathers advise their boys to be good; while the boy, if bright and shrewd, knows that the advice is carried about to be given away and not practised, because the father is not good himself. Of what avail is it? This is the weak side of churches. However unreasonable it may be to expect the minister to be better than other people, it is true that his words gain a tremendous power when his life shows that he regards the grand ideals he preaches as practical, and tries to live them out. One must be more than a guide-post, that points the way, but never goes. The advice of a deacon who cheats, or a new convert who lies, is apt to end in breath. So, when a man proves a theological doctrine by false witness and perverting evidence, he must not wonder at the growth of doubt. If you expect others to value a treasure, you must show that you value it yourself. So you cannot help others up out of their animality into the upper stories of heart and brain and spirit, unless you let them see your sincerity in your trying, at least, to climb yourself. Thus you cannot do the world much good, except as you live in the upper stories, and say, "*Come up* and see how sweet is the air, how wide and beautiful the prospect!"

How, now, can you climb? Where are the stairways?

First, *think!* Look about you. Do not get

buried in the present only, and the things that immediately press upon your attention. Think! The world is large. Heaven and earth contain many things. Your little affairs are only a very small part. Try to realize this, and go out of yourself to discover the things as yet unseen.

And then *do!* How does a man ever learn anything beyond him? Simply by *doing* it. How did you learn arithmetic? By *doing* the problems. How does one learn to play the piano? By playing. How does a child learn to walk? By walking. How do you develop any faculty? By using it. So the heart, the brain, the moral life, the spiritual, can only be made and kept alive *by use*. Exercise yourselves in all the good and high things you wish to acquire, however feebly at first, and you will increase in strength. The convalescent at first can only walk a few steps to the window or on the sunny side of the street; but use gives vigor, till again, as of old, he ranges the valleys, climbs the hills, and stands exultant on mountain-tops, with the seas at his feet, his head above the clouds, and his eyes looking clear on the never-setting stars.

A WONDROUS structure is this house of life!
Story on story high
It lifts from out the street's dull noise and strife
Its dome against the sky.

Here in the basement filth and revelry :
It seems a cattle-pen,
Where passions struggle and brute creatures lie :
They do not look like men.

But climb this stairway, and above the noise
Here is pure love's sweet nest ;
In cages by each window, birdlike joys
Sing their low songs of rest.

The mother sits with love-light in her eyes,
And all about her feet
The children play. Her baby lullabies
The picture make complete.

Another stairway up, and here is brought
The wide world's gathered lore :
These rooms have treasured all the age's thought
Of after and before.

Here is the joy of knowing, and the thrill
Of him who, first of men,
Sees some star-truth, new found, his vision fill, —
A truth not seen till then.

Another story higher, here behold
The realm of right and law ;
Here stand the world's good heroes, who of old
To them men's hearts did draw.

And over this the dome, ablaze with light,
Through whose clear glass 't is given
To see God's higher glories day and night
Ring the whole round of heaven.

Now that we 've entered this great house of life,
Let us go higher, friends, —
Stairway on stairway o'er the filth and strife
Climb where God's heaven bends.

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Compiled by Rev. Rush R. Shippen

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FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 27.

THE BRIGHT SIDE OUT.

BY

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

THE BRIGHT SIDE OUT.

He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good. — Matt v. 45.

AMONG the mysteries that no knowledge is able to solve is the shining of the sun. It shines on with equal heat to-day as in the ages of our fathers. What is the nature of its mighty heat? What feeds its fires? Why does it not cool or fade? The sun is the great, visible symbol of constancy. We turn away from it, we move farther off, we put up our little veils of vapor to shut out its light; but the sun remains constant, pouring out its inexhaustible warmth and light in the face of far-off worlds and into empty space. So says Jesus of the unchanging and infinite Goodness. We are accustomed to hear God called the unchangeable in prayers and liturgies: thereby, God is often made to seem farther away. Jesus is not here speaking to praise God, but to teach men. See, he says, God's constant love! Why? To worship it? No, to imitate it. Be God's children, he says, by being constant as he is. This is the summit of the Ser-

mon on the Mount. Two or three sentences here, if you understand them, are the key to everything which Jesus taught.

Most men have two sides which they alternately turn to you. There is a good side, which they turn at will upon their friends, as a revolving light-house throws its rays toward a passing ship. "Ah!" you say, as the blaze flashes over the water, "we had thought that there were only ugly rocks there." There is a bad or seamy side in men's natures. It is as if there were two different men, or as though each man had a double, not like himself, but as unlike as possible, behind the same features. To-day, the good man is outside, and turns a serious, friendly face upon you. This is the man who meets you in company, who bows his head in church, whom his children love, who does quiet kindnesses to the poor; a very good neighbor, if you have need of him. You would like him wholly, if it were not for his double. The double does and says exasperating things. He is sharp, greedy, and stingy. He is narrow, unsocial, fretful, a pessimist by nature. Which of these men will you find, when you call upon your friend? No one knows. You may find the one going out and the other coming in. You may be interrupted in the midst of your conversation by the double whom you had not expected.

Of course, only the good man lives in the inner and sacred places of the home, the bad double being a sort of servant to do the ruder business and to

guard the privacy of the soul. No: the two men change places at intervals inside a man's home, and before wife and children. The better man does not rise sometimes in the morning, but the baser double, who has to be adroitly managed to get along with him.

Some one says that this man with two sides or personalities must be a hypocrite. This is just what he is not. He shows out precisely what he is. On his good side, he is everything that he seems to be; what he says he means. A hypocrite acts a part, professes what he does not mean, wears a friendly face or uses a cordial tone when inwardly he wishes you out of his sight. A hypocrite tries to wear a mask and conceal the worst side.

There are a few people who have no vexatious double to perplex or alienate us, whose simple, constant nature is our wonder. But most of us are conscious of the two almost distinct sides or selves. We hardly know which is real, the better or the worse self. Times of abject humiliation come, when we could honestly say, if this worse side were all, that there was "no health in us." On the bad side, as far as that goes, one man seems to be as bad as another. The respectable man on his bad side has no advantage over the base man. The acts which he then does, the words which he speaks, are as mean and dastardly as any one's acts and words are. Passion, stinginess, jealousy, in no wise change their character because the man has a good side with

which they are inconsistent. The Old Testament stories of Jacob and David are typical stories of men who, having a good side and also a bad side, are the more detestable when they turn their bad side to the world.

We call a man good, according to the constancy with which he turns his better side to us. A bad man is not one who has no good side, but whose good side is inconstant. The bad side is something more than the mere absence of light. It is positively hurtful, as though a planet on one side cast life-giving rays, but, turning its other side, cast rays that pained and killed. So there is a double power toward life and death that every man carries about. Turning one side, he does every one good: turning the other side, he hurts you.

What is it commonly that makes a man give you his good side? It is that you give him first your good side. There is a principle of reflection back and forth between you, each drawing on the good in the other and giving it back. You naturally do good to those who do good to you. There are wholesome, cordial natures who draw out the best there is in you. You can no more turn the bad side to them than a mirror held to the light can help reflecting it back again. The rule seems to be fair and natural to do good to those who do good to you, or, in other words, Whatever men do unto you, good or bad, do ye even so to them. This is the law of the material world, in which each inani-

mate thing answers back in kind, — light to light, color to color, sound to the blow struck upon it, — action and reaction being equal. This is the way children behave, who reflect back whatever you do to them and the influences around them. This was the early idea about God, as in the terrible verses, "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward;" as though the Eternal also, like a man, had two sides, one good and the other cruel and jealous.

Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is laboring to show the secret of a higher law. It had already dawned upon the world, but it wanted enforcement. Whereas before men had been permitted to live on their bad side as often as they had to meet the bad, whereas before men could be good to their friends and bad to their enemies, revolving from one side to the other as circumstances ordered, now Jesus said, Men must present their good side to every one. It is here that the famous passage comes, "Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." It seems the climax of extravagance. It is a metaphor to illustrate the larger spiritual law. It is as though Jesus said, When a man turns to you his bad or hurtful side, do you still turn to him your good and beneficent side.

Our conscience answers to this larger law. Be you however passionate or revengeful, no man

could treat you so ill as to warrant your turning your bad side on him. He might be a criminal, and you an officer sent to arrest him, he might be a rebel in arms, and you a soldier fighting for your country, but you need never be anything else toward him than your best self, — true, just, magnanimous, friendly. A certain divine dignity rises in you to condemn your demeaning yourself to the nature of the bad by showing yourself bad. Shall the sun cease to shine because men do evil beneath it? Shall God cease to be beneficent? Shall a man, who has caught the secret of the beneficent working of God, cease from his beneficence because another is evil, or because no one thanks or rewards him?

This rule opens into every realm of man's life. Does some one say, "I must answer back in the dealings of trade, and match the methods of people about me"? The rule says that you shall show your truthful and just side, though every man about you be false. Would you not debase yourself to turn on men a false side, who had once turned on them your true and divine side; to begin to reflect the rays that hurt and kill, who had it in you to throw the unceasing rays that save and help?

Hear what one, whom men have called a heathen, on whom the eternal light undoubtedly shone, said about this: "A man should use himself to think of those things only about which, if one should suddenly ask, 'What hast thou now in thy thoughts?' with perfect openness thou mightest immediately answer

this or that; so that from thy words it should be plain that everything in thee is simple and benevolent, and one that cares not for . . . any rivalry or envy and suspicion, or anything else for which thou wouldest blush, if thou shouldest say that thou hadst it in thy mind."

This is plainer, if possible, when you think of the relations in which we stand as husbands and wives, mothers and sisters and children. There is a subtle kind of hypocrisy by which men turn their good side to neighbors, customers, and strangers, make themselves agreeable, show themselves friendly, do favors, and speak genial words, who at home rest themselves, as it were, from the strain of their good behavior, and turn the other and baser side to those whom they ought to treat best. They excuse themselves, from the heathen point of view. They reflect, they say, what they find at home. The temper within is not sunny and cheerful, as they have a right to expect. There are fretful children and jaded housekeepers. Why should not each one reflect what he gets, — love and cheerfulness when they shine, but not otherwise? This is what the barbarous nature in us instinctively says, "Do as others do." And here comes the beautiful law of constancy, clear, simple, authoritative, as if an angel said it. You have no right, it says, to answer back what others give, but only what is best in you. Shall we say to those we love words less courteous and friendly than we should say to a stranger?

Shall we wear a face before our children for their untutored minds to catch and reflect in turn that we should not dare to show upon the street, or express our mean impatience at trifles in the tone that the cynic uses wherewith to sneer?

It is said that it is not human to live upon the friendly side. It is precisely the most human thing to do. Doing this, one most completely and joyfully lives the life of a man. It is easy enough to keep the good side turned, while love is fresh, and we dare not, on peril of losing it, show the mean self to one whose best opinion we crave. Surely, our love is not less after the ties and cares of years have cemented it and priceless responsibilities have bound us fast. It is the interference of the bad self that wearies us. One word that the bad self says jars and tires us more than an hour of work. A room full of impatient children cannot break us down while we hold the firm, tolerant, cheerful temper toward them. Catch the secret of holding the good self toward the blows and brunt of the world, and you have established a safeguard against nervous prostration and invalidism.

The bad self, you answer, is there. How can one help it, if he shows himself? You cannot help his existence, but you hold the veto power over him. You shall not let him speak a word or do an act. You shall bind and muzzle him. Fretfulness never spoke except for harm. Where was a child ever helped by your showing yourself ill-natured? How

dare you let your bad self, that deserves to be punished, strike or punish a child? Or when was the sunny atmosphere brought back to a home by your complaining of the want of it? There is a method, unfailing and restful, by which the bad self can be, by and by, suppressed and effaced. Turn your better self on the home. Answer no unjust word with taunt or reproach, but only with friendly, large-hearted tolerance. Answer back no fretful child in kind, but control and win him with serene and firm good temper. Is there gloom in the house? One soul, turning her better self on the inmates, can flood it with sunshine. Was it "the other's fault" that your home is not happy? No: it is your fault. One tolerant, sunny-tempered, constant soul in a house can do everything.

Some one says, "I am not good enough." Your good self is good enough. When you are friendly, magnanimous, helpful, no one wants more than that of you. Be what you are when your good self speaks, and it is all that your home asks. All homage, obedience, devotion, and love that you need shall go to your good self. It is no immodesty to praise your good self. It is God's nature in you.

The good self is only there, you say, when some one else shows goodness to bring it out. A shame on us, then, if we only love our friends after they have begun to love us! A shame on us, if we will do nothing to serve, to help, to comfort our house-

hold, except on the ignoble condition of equivalents! A shame on us, if we will not begin to throw light, and keep on throwing light, as long as any one needs to be lighted! This is the precise point to which we are speaking. We have nothing to do in this world except to maintain the good self shining, summer and winter, night and day, like God's sun.

The home is the type of all social relations, as all mankind, truly considered, is a larger family. The old heathen idea holds place that socially one may have two sides, — a genial side and a side of reserve and coldness, alternately to show to friends or to strangers. It is the old story, "We will love those who love us." It is the reciprocal action, back and forth, between those who belong in the same set, as of the light reflected between mirrors around the walls of a single room. The room is bright, but no one outside is lighter for it. We see people daily meet each other in society. How careful they are not to go more than half way, — to gauge their conduct, their manners, their measure of respect by the standard of what they get! They do as people do to them, not as they would be done by. No increase of God's life comes in this way. It is not by reciprocity of what others do, but by overplus beyond what others do or can return.

Jesus once gave his disciples a lesson about this. He noticed that they made their feasts and showed their attentions within exclusive sets. They thought

to pay back in kind to those who had loved them. He told them that this was not enough. Not a soul more got love by this merely reciprocal action among the people of a set. You must break over your exclusive sets, he said. You must call in those who had not invited you, and could not invite you in turn. You must start new circles of beneficent influences where there were none.

Every one knows something of the almost electric surprise of this kind of greeting. We who are not specially touched by receiving our dues from our neighbors, the proper courtesy, the decent consideration, the payment of an obligation, — whatever we take as our right, — have been thrilled at receiving what we did not deserve: courtesy, as if to an equal, from our elders; thoughtfulness, as to a friend, from strangers; a smile, a word, a recognition of our common humanity, a helping hand, coming as if from heaven. The unexpected generosity, the love to which we were not entitled, shining out on our lonely way and lighting the dark corners of our hearts, — these are the influences that have made us better. Who would not delight to carry this kind of influence?

We are not establishing an impossible ideal, or asking that you should love every one alike. It is quite possible to turn our friendly side constantly on men. Our manner should say to the stranger, "We believe that God's nature is in you. Show it to us." Our attitude should say, even to enemies,

"We wish you good, and not harm. We would be friends, if you permit." This is not loving people alike, though it is readiness to love them as much as in us lies.

There are three ways in which bodies behave as regards the light. There is a kind of surface which is mostly absorbent, and destroys light; there is a surface which reflects whatever it gets; there are also bodies which catch fire, and produce light in turn. No one needs to be taught against being a dark surface, to absorb good and turn it to evil. Most men mean to reflect what they get. They intend to do as much as is done for them, as the moon and planets reflect the sunlight that falls on them, being bright on one side and dark on the other side. Christianity contemplates more than this. It aims to make men catch the fire and produce light. Men are of the same nature as the sun, — suns themselves.

This makes the moral law very simple. It is what Paul means when he says that the life of the spirit is above law. You do not have to keep in mind a dry list of moral rules. You do not have to discipline the evil nature in you or be fighting appetites and passions. The good self is naturally just, benevolent, reverent of God and man. We constantly turn that side in word and action, and upon all men alike. The only thing we have to think of is to keep it turned and fixed. The mirror says, "I reflect;" and that is all. The sun says, "I blaze

and shine. I give whether others reflect or not. I keep shining when nothing else shines." That is the idea of Christianity. Little by little the whole mass of the life catches with that kindling. The area of darkness grows smaller. By and by there will be nothing dark.

The idea of sin is simplified. Sin is the turning of the bad self. Whoever turns on a man his worse self instead of the good self sins. It is not so much what he does or says as it is the attitude. We owe each other the best that is in us. Whoever turns away the best, and gives us the low and mean, hurts us, makes our life less, and, so far as in him is, darkens the face of the world. To save a man from sin is to help turn his good self again on the world. Wherever love shines, whoever gives us his best, whoever turns the divine nature upon our view, saves us from sin. Fill the world full of true men, living the life of God's sons, and sin is impossible.

The explanation of Jesus' nature is here. What is it to be the son of God? It is to be one who shines and is beneficent, as God shines and is beneficent. The untaught, heathen, material man does good as good is done to him; and that is all. The spiritual man does good like God, with pure love of good, and without demanding return. Who is it that has seized the idea of casting the utmost possible light, with simple faith in the beneficent, life-giving power of the light? That is, according to Jesus, to be a son of God.

There is a class of men everywhere who can be depended upon to do everything that promises to serve man. You ask no service of them in vain. They are committed to help you carry light and good. They demand no compensation, whatever they receive being incidental to the work of their lives. Their main question is not, Will a thing pay? or Will it bring fame? or Will it be difficult? but Will it do any good? Their ruling principle of helping and carrying good is the same, though men oppose and misunderstand. They recognize no enemies, foreigners, nor inferiors, nor any whom they would not benefit. The ignorant and thriftless, the vicious and injurious, may be assured of their pity. They are cosmopolitan. They are in every profession, making their professional skill the instrument of their purpose. They have their hands on the wheels of government; when they shall rule, wars will stop. They are in every honorable business; they hold wealth as a trust which they do not dare to spend self-indulgently. They are employers where men are to be used as brothers. They are in all trades, making it the delight of their work that they give more than they receive. They are in humble stations which their generous spirit glorifies. They are in thousands of homes, — wives, sisters, mothers, — giving love out of the abundance of their hearts to those who can never requite them. What if they are not loved in return? It is enough if they make the lives of men

brighter. It is their characteristic that they add something of themselves to everything that their hands touch. They pay you your dues, but they add the fragrance of their friendly intent; their thanks are personal words; their greeting conveys warmth.

It is like an order of knights sworn to show forth the love of God while life lasts. While others say, We will enjoy this life; while others say, We will get most out of it; while many say, We will give as good as we receive, they say, We will start good, we will establish new centres of influence, we will add to all that we get, like fruitful land giving back ten, twenty, a hundred fold. This is an ideal, you say, not a fact. It is both. You know such people. The old, bad self occasionally torments and shames them. But the bad self is stripped of authority. In the moments of inspiration, when love blazes up, when pity asserts herself, when the soul sees her visions of the beneficent life, the bad self already disappears.

Prayer now reaches its highest significance. How irrational it once seemed to pray, as though with mechanical words to turn the Eternal! It was because we had only learned the alphabet of prayer. Prayer is now the most rational, natural, and necessary fact. It is the catching of the finite torch from the central flame; it is the turning of the good side of the soul into its fixed place for the day; it is the open vision of the aim of one's life.

Prayer is to say, "What, Lord, wouldst thou have me to do? How shall thy light be made farthest to shine?" It is the new consecration of the soul from hour to hour to the beneficent life. If men and women in this simple and natural way, as the old Persians turned to the face of the sun, so in a spiritual fashion turned to the Eternal for light and love, wherewith to bestow, there would be few weary days or heavy hearts.

This order of men wherever you find them is the Church. They have caught Jesus Christ's idea; what he meant by being a son of God they mean. What wild heresies men have taught, under the name of the Church! You could belong to the Church and not know what the Magna Charta of the Church was or what the Church was for. You could be "in regular standing," and throw the influence of your life against the real Church. Men have called themselves Christians, and lived to absorb the good things of this world, as a pagan might have been ashamed to do. And men wonder that the true Church does not grow faster. Why, the world to this day does not know what you mean when you say "the Church." The world has yet to hear the veritable gospel of the living and beneficent God. The world, that thinks it believes in Christ, the official personage who opens the door of heaven to men who have never caught the meaning of heaven, only begins to believe in the beautiful life of him who opens the

secret of heaven to those who would do the deeds of the sons of God.

And men wonder about the evidences of religion and immortality, and seek far and near, and ransack ancient records and pore over abstruse philosophies, while here within the limits of a few luminous verses lies more evidence of God and the things eternal than a lifetime can elaborate. Do you doubt God? Then take the shining of the sun as your parable; see that your life shines after the same untiring fashion, and the world shall be illuminated with the proof of God. Do you want to believe in immortality? Catch the blaze of the love which a Christ had for men. Be willing to burn to make light and heat, careless what becomes of yourself, so be others are lighted and warmed, and the old word comes true, that losing your life you find it again. Such love is eternal.

In certain despondent hours we ask, "What is the good of our lives, and what are we here for?" How can we help asking this, in the midst of the baffling mysteries that encircle us like mountain walls? How shall we reassure ourselves or make life seem worthy, when disappointments fall, when age creeps on, or friends seem few? There is a manner of life in which it is absolutely good to be here. There are men and women of whom no one says, Why were they here? or What good did they do? We know that their work and their lives are linked with everything that makes the heavens beautiful or

the shining of the light wholesome. Their lives go in harmony with the deeper notes that the universe sings. There is no doubt that it was good for Jesus to have been here, though he died at barely past thirty years, and few knew his worth till afterward. It has been good in like manner to have lived, for nameless men and women, who have made the darkness less and the light more, whose bodies rest to-day in a thousand churchyards, whose souls are with God. Their friends do not ask why they were here or what good was it to live; the treasure that they left is imperishable.

The problems of existence cease to perplex us, when we catch the gospel that these facts carry. Let us likewise turn a friendly, cheerful face on the world, lend our best selves to men, shine with the clear, constant light of a generous love to help and save, not alone those who also shine back into our faces, but mostly where need is: where men are poor, ignorant, or friendless; where cares press on tender hearts; where little children will be hurt if we frown on them, but will bless us forever if, like God's sun, we go shining steadily on. Ah! friends, what an ideal we have of the true Church of God, and the plan of our lives that we pray to work out, fearless of labor or care, fearless of death, gladsome, serene, sunny, beneficent.

Fifth Series.] [No. 28

THE THORN-BEARER.

BY

W. C. GANNETT.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

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(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

THE THORN-BEARER.

IT is nothing exceptional to have a thorn in the flesh, — a chronic bodily infirmity; it is not even exceptional to use it as an element of self-transfiguration. It *is* exceptional to use it thus as successfully as Paul used his.

To know what Paul did in spite of his thorn and with his thorn, begin at the middle of the eleventh chapter of his second letter to the Corinthians, and read to the middle of the twelfth chapter; then turn back to chapter four, and beginning at "We are troubled," read it to the end. It must have been a most inspiriting thing to meet Paul of Tarsus, and spend a half-day with him while he patched at tents, — something to remember all one's after-life. What stories he could tell, that man of three shipwrecks, eight floggings, and one stoning! What does a man think of, when floating a day and a night in the sea? He could have told us. How does a man feel in the hands of a mob? He knew, if he had not forgotten such a ripple as a mob. What were his favorite hymns in prisons? He had a

list ready in his heart. But if we had asked him which of all his pains and perils was the worst, we fancy a quiet smile would have grown on his face as he answered, "My life-companion, my thorn in the flesh, — the worst, and yet the best!"

It is worth while trying to think what such an answer would mean. Worth while, because to many of us the years are apt to bring the thorn, even if no accident, and no bequest at birth, have brought it early. Now the thorn is blindness, now it is deafness, now it is the lameness of a limb, now the wear-out of some internal organ. As many senses and as many organs as the healthful body has, so many possibilities of thorn-growths in us, — that is, of permanent mal-growths, chronic cripplings. Now, what does it *mean* to say of such a thing, "The worst, and yet the best"? To say with Paul, "I take *pleasure* in it; for when I am weak, then am I strong"? How can one rise from a catalogue, "Thrice was I beaten," etc., up to that chant, "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed"? Or, rather, not how to get from one to the other, but how to feel like singing the very catalogue as part of the chant! Paul of Tarsus is not here to tell, but every village has its Pauls and Paulines, two or three; and one has perhaps his own smaller, blunter thorn to help explain — like a sort of half-breed interpreter — their experience

As we watch and listen, and try to interpret, something like this seems to be the philosophy of thorn-bearing: —

(1) Face the fate! Accept it as fate, as Margaret Fuller did "the universe," — something to be neither ignored nor dodged. If it *can* be, if one is still hoping, praying (as Paul tells us he did thrice) that it may depart, it is not yet the full-grown thorn, — the blindness which is to darken all the years, the deafness which is to be life's growing silence, the lameness which is to make the third limb always necessary. Face the fate, without sentimentalizing about it. Say rather, This thing is to cripple me always, everywhere; it is my life's condition, — part of *my* universe. Say this, and instantly it begins to grow easier to bear. The struggle against *it* is over, and what remains is simply to struggle against the hinder it imposes. Fate is often not so hard to bear as things curable. The thing curable is an enemy until it be cured; the thing incurable is a companion, and the sole question is how to make it a pleasant one.

(2) Then one learns the difference between acceptance and surrender, between becoming a subject and becoming a victim. The thorn is in the flesh, — it is for me to say, It shall *stay* thorn of my *flesh*, and never become thorn of my mind. It shall not conquer *me* as well as my body. If it be my Rome, I will be its Greece, conquering

in the spirit the brute force that conquers me in body. What Paul, infirm and of base presence, did; what Epictetus, old, lame, and a slave, did (read one book of his, or but his first chapter); what Fawcett, England's blind postmaster, did, — and has just re-done, as it were, in the person of his daughter, inheritor of his high courage, — that can *I* do, and that I will! This cramping life-companion I will somehow tame into an ally, make my friend.

(3) The blind man, deaf man, lame man, saying this, soon learns that there are helps awaiting him; especially that people, as a rule, are very kind to any cheerful cripple, — and not from pity only, but from admiration. There is a great deal of delicate allowance made for thorn-bearers, even if they are not brave. We shall have to travel far to find the circle which does not appear to best advantage around its lamer members. Little acts of tenderness and grace spring up about them. For them the elbow of competition turns into the offered hand of co-operation. Each one who is thorned is "a little fellow" to the unthorned ones, and the world is beginning to be a pretty good world for the little fellows in it. But much more than this is true, if the thorn-bearer be a hero in his bearing. To hardly any kind of heroism does the world give readier recognition, heartier admiration, than to his. A man must have conquered *something* to be a hero:

if the something be other men, we give him shoulder-straps, a statue in the public square, and write "General" before his name; if the something be a man's own self, his crippling or his sin, we set the thought of him among ideals in the heart, and begin to call him "Saint."

(4) More and more this fact, that heroism of the rarer sort is open to us thorn-bearers, dawns over us, bringing happy visions. *Here* is a career then, not merely in spite of, but in virtue of, our crippling. If much is cut off from us here is something added, — an Order of Nobility into which cripples alone can enter. Nor can we fail to feel that success here is not only true success, and accredited by the world as true success, but that it is thanked for by the world as high service rendered it. For, sooner or later, all must take their turn and *bear;* and we, the chronic cripples, who have learned the art of bearing well, can strengthen those strong comrades when, for an hour, they need help sorely. What joy so great to a humble soul as the hope of rendering high service, after all? And with this joy comes another, — the joy of entering a noble fellowship. This deprivation, this suffering of mine, if borne well, puts me in the muster-roll with Paul himself, and "all the martyrs' noble host." That chronicle of his, "Five times received I forty stripes save one," and so on, begins to read like some ancestral record of our

house, or a page from the story of "our regiment," — old bravery making brave new battle-fields forever. In such fellowship the Bible meanings deepen to us: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the living of Jesus may also be made manifest in our body." In *ours;* why not? And Jesus' own word about yoke-bearing, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me," — did it mean a yoke like his? Did he wear one himself?

(5) Gradually, while trying to be less undeserving of companionship like this, we realize that it is growing easier for us to "live in the spirit" than it used to be before the crippling came. We cannot help the inference that perhaps it is easier for us than for those who know no thorn. The reason is, of course, that we *are* living more in the spirit in thus utilizing the thorn in our flesh. "The inward man that renews itself as the outward man perishes;" "When I am weak, then am I strong." He was right; he was right! And to be learning in our own experience that what he meant is true, is to be making one's home in places where the Beatitudes were — and still are — born.

(6) One thing more is ours: it is easier now than before the thorn came to sympathize with the humbled, all the hindered, all strivers-and-failers, all those who are bearing pain and loss, and so, first or last, easier to sympathize with all

men. If brave thorn-bearing makes the brave our brothers, still more it makes us brothers to all who are not brave. It is almost impossible to feel the prick of our own pain and be supercilious, or indifferent, or unwilling to forgive a fellow-cripple.

This must be some part, at least, of the meaning that lies within Paul's answer, that, of all his pains and perils, the thorn in his flesh, his life-companion, was the worst and yet the best. Certainly the chemistry whose working in us is thus hinted owes its laws to Life larger than our own, even to that One Great Life which lives as strength and grace through all our trying, bearing, doing. So he called it well, "God's grace sufficient for me," "His strength made perfect in my weakness."

Into the Order of the Thorn only those whose pain is in themselves are privileged to enter. There is one Order of Nobility yet higher, only one; but into this other all who will can enter. The brotherhood whose symbol is the Cross outranks the brotherhood whose symbol is the Thorn.

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AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon Street, Boston

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

Tracts descriptive of Unitarian principles, doctrines, and methods, are sent free to any who desire to know what Liberal Christianity stands for and works for. A list of these free tracts will be sent on application. A full descriptive catalogue of the publications of the Association, including doctrinal, devotional, and practical works, will be sent to all who apply. All religious books by Unitarian authors are kept on sale, and will be sent on receipt of price. A list of such books, with prices, will be furnished upon request.

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I give and bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation established by law in the State of Massachusetts, the sum of.....dollars.

FIFTH SERIES.] [No. 29

A

CHIVALROUS RELIGION.

TO OUR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN.

BY

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

THE American Unitarian Association is the working missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It seeks to promote sympathy and united action among Liberal Christians, and to spread the principles which are believed by Unitarians to be essential to civil and religious liberty and progress and to the attainments of the spiritual life. To this end it supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes, sells, and gives away books, sermons, tracts, hymn-books, and devotional works.

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A CHIVALROUS RELIGION.

To our Young Men and Women.

Mr. Hawthorne once wrote a little story called "The Celestial Railroad." The story described a new sort of "Pilgrim's Progress," in which the way to heaven was made to go by easy grades and in luxurious carriages. The famous Slough of Despond was bridged, the Valley of Humiliation was filled up, and a tunnel was put through the Hill Difficulty. The train allowed passengers a comfortable time to stop over in the City of Vanity Fair.

Religion is often put into such a form as to remind one of Mr. Hawthorne's story of "The Celestial Railroad." How easy a religion can we offer? In the first place, we have a religion extremely simple for the mind. It compels no one to recite any long creed. It has no burdensome catechism to commit to memory. It leaves every one's thought free.

It is a very generous religion in its rules of

conduct. It does not forbid pleasant amusements. It does not require its people to wear long faces. It bids them enjoy the good things of this world heartily.

It does not seem also to be a religion that taxes one's pocket severely. It imposes no tithes. It allows every one to give what he thinks right for charity. Neither does it seem to be harsh in its demands for the support of its churches. It does not call the staying away from church a sin. It makes of Sunday the most delightful of days. Thus modern religion comes to us with a very pleasant aspect.

Why is it that such a description of religion does not win our hearts? We do not really want an easy religion. We may not be able to join the Moravians or the Salvation Army. Nevertheless the heroic deeds of the Moravian missionaries and the evident self-sacrifice of the Salvation lassies working in the slums of our great cities move our admiration. The fact is, we want a chivalrous religion, or we have little respect for religion at all.

The story of religion, at least in its great and living periods, has been a story of chivalrous heroism. We read the Hebrew prophets to-day because they risked everything for their faith in righteousness. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are dry reading, except for the fact that they tell

the deeds of men who made supreme sacrifice for the religion of the one God. The life of Jesus is nothing unless it appeals to the chivalry in us. Throughout eighteen Christian centuries the saints have been men and women who counted not their own life dear unto them. We are glad of the name of the "Mayflower," because the little vessel brought men to these shores who risked everything for the sake of their religion. By as much as we are children of the fathers, we cannot be content with any religion which simply bids us take our comfort and enjoy ourselves. Indeed, it is doubtful whether excellent music, painted windows, æsthetic surroundings, and cushioned pews in themselves ever had the least power in bringing to men the peace of God, the consolations of religion, or the enthusiasm for humanity.

All this becomes evident when we ask what we mean by chivalry. Chivalry is essentially that which goes on its way toward any noble service without the thought of personal reward. Chivalry never makes bargains. It never asks to be paid in advance or thanked. The chivalrous friend is never assured beforehand that his friendship will pay. The chivalrous patriot never knows in shedding his blood that his heroism will come back to him. In the spirit of chivalry there is a generous and infinite abandon of self. This does not mean that chivalry acts without reason or

blindly; but its reasons, good as they are, always stop short of demonstration. In the action of chivalry there is always present an element of faith and venture.

This spirit of chivalry is necessary to religion. A bargaining or mercenary religion is impossible. Religion grows out of knowledge; our modern religion especially has a splendid foundation in facts and reason. But religion begins with no complete demonstration; the deepest facts — the thought of God and the immortal life — do not offer themselves with guarantees to compel the mind. The fact is, religion would not have any heroism in it, would not appeal to the holy spirit of chivalry in us, would not be what the soul of man craves, if selfishness could be assured beforehand of its own ease, safety, and sufficient compensation. We are glad that this is so. The method is worthy of God; it is his noblest appeal to his children.

We think our liberal faith a very simple religion; reasonable, broad, generous, pleasant, and exactly suited to our present times. It is fine to discover also what distinct claims it makes on our chivalry. In the first place, the highest religion of to-day is as yet the religion of the few. The vast multitudes do not understand it. Its noblest thought is looked upon with suspicion as dangerous; especially if it takes the

name of *Unitarian*, many enlightened people are afraid of it. There are few places in the English-speaking world where its avowal is popular; the hearty and enthusiastic belief in it is everywhere exceedingly rare.

Moreover, the method of the new religious thought is extremely bold. Religion has mostly seemed to men to be buttressed by vast fortifications. Around its citadel lay a dangerous country. Enemies to religion lay concealed in the forests and behind the hills. Religion was thought to be a centre of attack, from the side of science and from reason alike. The soul of man that wanted to be safe must stay within the fortress. Now the new appeal of religion is to go outside the citadel, — to leave the earthworks and the moat in the rear, to search the forests, to face all lurking enemies, to stand in the open field; the call of religion is to confront all the facts of the world in the mighty trust that this is a universe, that no enemy to religion is anywhere to be discovered in it. This is distinctly a call to the chivalry in us. It seems at first to involve a risk of all that we have held most dear. It asks for volunteers who will search the forests and march among the hills. No one can be sure in advance where the climbing path of truth may lead. It threatens to go near to terrible precipices; it threatens to lose itself behind perpendicular rocks

of doubt. The appeal is to the brave mind, regardless of self, to march on and climb, with sublime trust that truth leads surely to the heart of God.

Religion asks a harder thing than even to trust in the truth; religion affirms that this is God's world. It demands, then, that its sons and daughters shall live lives that befit the divine world; they shall live in the spirit of the beatitudes; they shall treat men by the Golden Rule. Here is a splendid venture for their chivalry. They cannot be assured in advance that the divine laws of life will work. Will it pay to be just and always to speak the truth? Can they live as God's children ought to live and make money enough not to starve? Can they safely follow ideals in politics? Can the different nations afford to treat each other as brothers? Can any one begin to live the good life as long as multitudes around him are not willing to do likewise? If a young man is afraid, if he wants guarantees for his own safety, if he demands personal reward and satisfaction, if he has no chivalry in him, he will not embrace our religion. He will try to find for himself some form of religious insurance which will promise future safety on cheap mercenary conditions. Our kind of religion eternally demands manhood and heroism. Religion forever insists upon a way of life which once taken will make men brave, sincere, true, and trustful.

It follows that the religion which we believe in makes tremendous demands for money. It holds, indeed, that money has its only uses in developing character and manhood. Through the large and fine uses of the good things of this world, — its comfort, its art, its beauty, its luxuries even, — through the winning and sharing, and the just distribution of all these symbols of value, man learns what the real and perennial values are.

All wealth, therefore, is a sort of trust fund wherewith to work the deeds of beneficence. The true man gets money and spends money, not narrowly as he pleases, not with himself as the centre, but as one of a great brotherhood in beneficent service. The true man, indeed, gives as the cashier at the bank pays out money over the counter. Show the cashier that the check is good, and he pays accordingly, asking no questions. Show the true man, likewise, a real human need, and he is there to meet that need as he best can. The need may be over the sea in distant Armenia; the need may be in a frontier town in the West. He cannot be sure in advance how his money will serve; least of all things is it likely ever to bring him back thanks or reward. Show him only a genuine need, and his chivalry goes forth to meet it. Is he not a trustee to do whatsoever he can, to the utmost, with all the means in his power? So broadly, with such splendid

completeness, does the new thought of religion embrace the whole realm of wealth and property; so uncompromising is it in its requirements of utterly generous giving; so clear is its appeal to the chivalrous hearts of the rich and the poor alike. For it says, "All we have is of God, for love's sake and the doing of good. Use all we have, then, and always for love's sake."

Is there any appeal to our chivalry now for the maintenance of churches? May we feel about them in these prosperous times as earlier men felt in the days of persecution and war? For unless the appeal comes home to the heart of chivalry to maintain our churches they cannot be longer required. There may be those who say to themselves, "We have no longer use for organized religion or the services of any church; we have learned for ourselves the secret of religion; we have it in our libraries; we can sit down any Sunday morning and read about it in beautiful books. Is it not coming also to the world likewise in every new magazine, and even in the newspaper? What need, then, that we should continue to maintain expensive churches? Why should we trouble ourselves to publish the gospel, which in due time will publish itself?"

There is something plausible in these suggestions. If the church is only a private club-house, if it is mainly for the prosperous class, there is

little to stir one's enthusiasm in maintaining this kind of church. But this is not the church of which we are thinking. The religious club does not fit at all the chivalrous religion that the modern world wants.

You are familiar with the sight of the water towers on the hills over many of our towns. Some one might say, "What is the use of the water tower? Why should I be taxed to keep the level of the water above my own house? I have my private well and my excellent cistern. These are good enough for me." But no citizen to-day would dream of saying this word. Every one knows that as the level is high in the water tower, the safety, comfort, and health of the whole city are secured. The height of the level in the tower means that all alike can have the pure water. The height of the level means, when a conflagration arises, that the engines can put out the fire. So with the true thought of the church. The true church is the water tower of the city. Its life is for all. As the level is high, so the public safety, the public morals, the political life of the city is raised. When the level is high no real danger can come to the city. All alike, rich and poor, are fed and sustained, when the level of genuine religion rises high in the tower.

Here, then, is the appeal to our chivalry. What is good and needful for all, what serves to make

men honest, generous, humane, merciful, what ministers to faith in God, in fronting the mysteries of the world, appeals to every generous soul to maintain. We will pay whatever it costs; we will be willingly taxed to keep the level of the moral and spiritual life high in our towers.

All these things sum up the one supreme rule of life. It was Jesus' idea that a man must give himself utterly to the life of religion; no halfway course was possible. With him it was utter abandon. We entirely accept his idea to-day. The good life of religion is the one life possible. Here is the divine spirit breathing through all of us; its name is Duty, its twin name is Love. The moral laws that rule human conduct are its modes of expression. The appeal of God is the call to the chivalry latent in all of us; it is the call of God to the heart of his child; it is to come out of our selfishness; it is to lay aside all pride and egotism; it is simply to give ourselves altogether to the sway of the divine life of obedience. Where truth goes we will follow; what duty bids we will do; where love commands we will go. This is life; venture it and see.

"Straight from the mighty bow this truth is driven:
'They fail, and they alone, who have not striven.'
Fly far, O shaft of light, all doubt redeeming,
Rouse men from dull despair and idle dreaming,
Heaven's high evangel be, gospel, God-given, —
'They fail, and they alone, who have not striven.'"

Fifth Series.] [No. 30.

THE DARK SOULS

AND

THE LIGHT.

FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN HOURS OF WEARINESS.

BY

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

Our Faith.

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
onward and upward forever.

Typical Covenant of a Unitarian Church.

In the love of the truth, and the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.

Our Declaration

(*As expressed in the By-Laws of the American Unitarian Association*).

"The object of the American Unitarian Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity; and all Unitarian Christians shall be invited to unite and co-operate with it for that purpose."

(*As expressed by the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches, at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1894.*)

"These Churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

"The Conference recognizes the fact that its constituency is Congregational in tradition and polity. Therefore, it declares that nothing in this Constitution is to be construed as an authoritative test; and we cordially invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

THE DARK SOULS AND THE LIGHT.

For Men and Women in Hours of Weariness.

How delightful really cheerful rooms are! They are cheerful, not on bright days alone, but on all days alike. It is because the articles in them, the surfaces, and the walls reflect the light.

The fact is, there are articles which absorb light. They seem to drink it in and use it up. Certain surfaces, certain wall-papers, have this absorbent quality. There are other articles and surfaces which have the opposite power, to reflect. As the dark and absorbent surfaces prevail in a room, it becomes somber and even gloomy. You may, indeed, be comfortable in it on a very bright day, but in dark or cloudy weather it breeds melancholy.

The somber rooms and the cheerful rooms are like the lives of men and women. There are lives that are dark and absorbent of the light; they take and use it up, but they do not reflect and give it out. There are lives also of the oppo-

site type; in the gloomiest weather they still go on reflecting all the light there is.

There is this difference even among children. Go to a children's party. All indeed is bright and happy; yet there are children there who simply have to be amused and entertained. They take all that they can get, but they do not reflect; the brightness, the fun, the gayety of the party comes from others. There are those among the children who know the happy secret of making the party a success. They have not come merely to get fun and absorb light; they have come to give out and to reflect all the joy there is.

We enter certain houses and hear the conversation. What strange instinct leads quite intelligent persons to dwell on stories of trouble and evil, to love morbid things? Some persons seem to breakfast, dine, and sup on horrors; they cast a gloom over you as often as you call upon them; they may be good people, honest and conscientious, but they are dark souls, absorbing the light. There are others whose courageous cheerfulness never deserts them; in the most melancholy weather they find light to reflect; one would pick out their faces in the crowd as they pass on the street; their very smile carries an infection of courage.

The truth is, which many do not yet see, that cheerfulness is a distinct virtue, to be added to

all the other virtues, — justice, truth, and the rest. It deserves a place with the best of them. It is a duty, as much as telling the truth or paying one's honest debts.

Are not all these things, however, some one asks, purely matters of temperament? Grant that they are largely matters of temperament; grant even that they depend somewhat upon the measure of vitality and animal spirits; we may admit precisely the same thing about an ugly temper. The good temper, no doubt, is largely a matter of health. Do we excuse ourselves, then, for showing an ugly temper? Do we sit down and say, "We are made so, and we cannot help it"? On the contrary, the harder the temperament is, the more need that we do something to curb, train, and cultivate it.

The problem with our temperament, whatever it is, is like the farmer's problem with his land. Here is a man who has a piece of hard soil on the hillside. It is full of stumps and rocks. Shall he therefore sit down and starve? No. He grubs out the stumps; he builds the stones into walls; he drains his land; and by and by this difficult hill farm is bearing big crops. On the other hand, the man who has the rich, level land at the foot of the hill may be spoiling it for want of care; he lets the weeds get into it; he lets the drains become clogged, and the land grows sour and

useless. Men work just such changes, both upward and downward, with their native temperaments. We have the utmost sympathy with the men of the somber hues, but we are perfectly certain that there is no need of their remaining somber and melancholy.

Yet how can any one be bright and reflect light when the conditions and circumstances are somber? Conditions and circumstances, we reply, have much to do in making life, but they often seem to work exactly the opposite way to that which many would suppose. Here is some one who has plenty of money, an easy life, opportunities of education and travel, fair health also, — all the conditions, in short, which men spend their labor in struggling after. Here are women surrounded by luxuries, with no labor to soil their hands, with endless social diversions. Strangely enough, all these conditions do not make their possessors cheerful persons. Indeed, we have seen plenty of such persons whose presence sobered us. You will find more pessimists among people who have easy conditions than among any other class in the world. The more light that falls on these absorbent surfaces, the more they extinguish it.

Where, now, will you go for the most steady and serene cheerfulness? In the opposite direction from that in which we have been looking.

You will find the most genuine cheerfulness among hard workers, women with heavy cares, those who have met losses and bereavements, whose life has been checkered with disappointment. You will often find invalids and aged people who have this marvellous gift of reflecting the light. Such persons are like the rooms which remain cheerful in the gloomiest weather.

The fact is, the secret of life which we seek depends on our own will. In other words, it depends upon the way we turn, — toward life or away from it. For instance, among the furnishings of my room there may be a mirror, capable of beautiful reflection. It is a mirror, however, which can be folded upon itself and closed up from the light, and so rendered perfectly dark. So with the most admirable temperament, if it turns away from the light, if it shuts itself within its own conceit, egotism, or selfishness.

On the other hand, we have often seen a silvery gleam of light amidst the bushes and rocks high on the side of the mountain. Ascend to the spot where the silver sheen is; you will find only the dark stone wet with the rain water which trickles over it. Why, then, does the stone shine amidst its tears? Because it exactly faces the sunlight. So human lives shine which face life, which take all the light they can get, and reflect it back with utter abandon.

All this is a matter of will, of intelligence and determination. We may not be able to control our circumstances, but we can make up our minds which way we will face. We can choose, if we will, not to turn our surface away from the light; we can make a vow to face the other way, to meet life and confront it with all that it brings; we can vow not to absorb but to reflect all the light that we can find.

Does any one need to be shown that this is a duty? Is any one tempted to say, "It is my own affair whether I am cheerful or not"? Does any one think it enough to be honest and truthful? Does any one still deny that it is possible for a melancholy nature to grow cheerful? No one who really thinks can say this; for cheerfulness itself is a part of the truth. We say that we believe in God; we call this God's world; we even name ourselves God's children. If this is God's world, then, and we wish to live as his children, what is there to be somber or anxious about? We have not, surely, the care of the great world on our shoulders; we are not fighting a fruitless battle for a losing cause. We are men under orders; the Great Commander directs all; we march the way of victory. If this is God's world, then, why should we not be glad on the dark days and in the sunny weather, in the night as in the day? This is truth; this is to

make our lives and our faces conform to our faith. The opposite, moreover, is not truth. It is false to the facts, if "the children of a king go mourning all their days."

We also wish to be honest, to give every one his due. But what is due from one soul to another? What eternal debts are there of which money debts are only a parable? The greatest of all debts are in light, love, gladness, faith. It is not honest to take the light from heaven and shut it up within ourselves. The light shut up and taken out of circulation turns to darkness, and hurts our own souls. Only so much light comes from the sun; it is duty, then, to reflect it forth, to spread it, and make it shine.

The fact is, every cheerful soul carries a message. Reflecting the light, each soul says to us, "God is here; I come from God. You, too, are God's child; listen, and hear his message." Like the young girl who sings in Browning's poem, each cheerful soul goes everywhere repeating, —

"God 's in his heaven; all 's well with the world."

If these things are so, — and they are as sure as the stars in their courses, — let us call for helpers and volunteers. We call for the children. Let them bravely face life; let them keep their faces in the way where light comes; let them reflect and spread the light, joy, and happiness

wherever they go. Their bright souls are wanted in every household to make sad hearts joyous again.

We appeal to grown men and women. Everywhere, in offices and shops and on the streets, the need is for men, strong and brave, who "look up and not down, forward and not backward, and lend a hand." They shall be God's messengers to redeem the world from its doubts.

In every home especially large-hearted women are needed. God save the home that has not one such bright, courageous, cheerful soul within it, to whom the children come with their sorrows to be gladdened, on whose love weary men depend!

Let us call for volunteers among the aged also. God bless the men and women who, having borne all life's vicissitudes, having grown old only in years, keep fresh and young in their hearts, who march on still with a smile on their faces, and when they take leave of this earth go forward as those who go to meet God, serene, courageous to the last!

SMOKE AND THE FLAME, THE

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THE

MIGHTY CONTRASTS OF LIFE.

FOR THE PERPLEXED AND THE QUESTIONING.

BY

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOSTON.

THE

MIGHTY CONTRASTS OF LIFE.

For the Perplexed and the Questioning.

There come times to the individual and the community when the contrasts of life impress us with wonder and awe. Immediately upon bright news and in the sight of happy lovers there comes the sudden stroke of death. In the midst of public festivities some terrible accident comes. What sort of a world is it, we ask, in which these opposites happen?

There is nothing more pathetic than the blind astonishment with which many quite intelligent persons look on this fact of contrasts. They take the good as a matter of course, but when the trouble comes they seem to be totally unprepared. They had never thought of this side of life before. Indeed there is something wrong in our whole system of education. There are actually growing up in many homes to-day young men and women who, as regards the deeper meanings of life, are hardly better off than if they lived in

the palaces of imperial Rome. University education which has taught many other things thoroughly has not begun to give to its possessors any serious philosophy of life. Men and women do not even know which way to look for the great consolations of religion.

There are two or three very simple considerations which deserve notice at the outset. First, about suffering and pain. Our generation seems to have gone to the opposite extreme from that of the early people. The savages practised their children in hardship and suffering. They taught them to expect pain and make little of it. The end in view was to produce toughness and heroism. On the other hand we take pain too seriously. We are too much afraid of it. We look at suffering merely from the point of view of our comfort and pleasure. The savage point of view was nearer to reality than this. We ought at least to know about suffering and pain, that they are much less terrible than the cultivated modern imagination makes them out to be in advance. Looked at from the other side, after we have passed through them, they actually sink into comparative insignificance. They are like the discomforts of a journey, which when we have reached home pass into forgetfulness, leaving us in happy possession of the positive results of our voyage.

Our generation, also, tends to make quite too much of the fact of death. It may be that the Oriental peoples, undervaluing human life, belittled death. In their opinion the individual existed for the sake of the tribe or the nation. If the family went on, it was little to them that the individual passed away. But we have doubtless gone to the other extreme. This is partly in consequence of the horrors of the mediæval theology, which made death man's enemy and a king of terrors. It shrouded the grave with the dread of future woe. We ought, by this time, to know better than the gloomy theologians taught. We ought to know that what comes to all alike, what most noble and heroic souls have always faced and must face, cannot be a real evil. We ought to let the good Stoics contribute to us something of their courage and to cease with them to speak of death, a physical incident, as a terrible thing. Solemn it doubtless is, but when the time comes, we will not run away from it like cowards.

We have said this without a word yet about religion. We have spoken merely from the plane of our intelligence. Add, however, to these considerations about pain and death one word of God or the immortal hope, and the whole level of their value is infinitely lifted at once.

Another important point needs here to be added. We are ruling out to-day all that bald,

artificial, and arbitrary conception of pain and death that regarded them as sent to man for his punishment or chastisement. The book of Job is full of the struggle of man's intelligence with this harsh doctrine of evil. The Almighty, men thought, singled out individuals for correction. Here was one who had already enjoyed too much of this world's good things. Here was another too happy in his friends. They must be disciplined by divers pains and penalties. It is no wonder that such a doctrine as this drove men the way of atheism. It is enough to say here that the intelligence of the world has got rid of this horrible alternative between atheism and an arbitrary deity. It is clear now that pain and suffering, losses and death, do not come by special decree for petty and personal reasons. They all fall under the workings of universal laws. The problem of life is no longer in the special and individual application of the laws. The great problem is with respect to the laws themselves. Are the deep laws of life worthy of a good God.

We pass on now to the more profound contemplation of the great contrasts of which we have spoken. It is no wonder if at the first thought of these tremendous contrasts many are simply dazed nd bewildered. There seems to be in nature some strange principle of opposites and

contradictions. There is a side of nature kindly and beneficent towards man. But there seems also to be an antagonistic side, cruel and pitiless. When the good comes and while it lasts, we are easy optimists, we think the good always will remain; but when the stern side appears, gloomy and menacing, the mind is baffled and perplexed. Some here give up the problem altogether. So far as they think about it at all, they remain bewildered all their lives. It is inexplicable, they say; no one can understand it.

Nevertheless, this perplexed, agnostic attitude of mind requires something by way of practical conduct. What will you do with these great contrasts? Will you do nothing whatever? Will you sway back and forth from the light to the shadow? Will you accept suffering when it comes as if at the hands of a malevolent power? Will you think of life as one thinks of the face of the Sphinx? For practical conduct there must surely be something better than this. At the worst, and however bewildered men are, there is nothing so practical as to act as if good and only good ruled the world. At the worst, the one thing to do is to face towards the good, and to hope, however blindly, that the sun will shine again in one's way.

There are some, however, who try to evade the mighty fact of contrasts altogether. They tell

us that evil, pain, suffering, death, are only in seeming; the mind makes its own evil. The mind, then, by thinking can change the evil to good. Thus evil, so far from being real, is only in the mind of the sufferer. But this sort of easy optimism is too much like juggling to commend itself to many sane minds. The sane mind respects the facts, whatever they are; the contrasts of life have a certain strange fascination for it; it suspects some deep significance to be discovered in them; it boldly chooses not to have pain made other than pain. Love, too, at its best, will not ask to be saved from its due sorrows and pains. Love would not be love if it had nothing to suffer at the loss of its dear ones.

There faces us next a grim possibility to bind the contrasts of life together under the name of evil. It may be said that this is the worst possible world. It may be said that its joys, its sunshine, its love, only heighten the depth of its woe. Nevertheless, very few persons can ever be pessimists. There are facts which no pessimism can explain. The world that offered the spectacle of a single Christ-life, the world that has shown us that spectacle reincarnated thousands of times, – a world in which the deepest facts are justice, love of truth, devotion, and love, — has surely a heart of good amidst its encom-

passing evil. Pessimism will never stay in its blackness; it always drops back into the original contrast and dualism out of which it sprang.

Moreover, the prince of pessimists, Schopenhauer himself, would not bid us live and act as pessimists. Man himself must be better than his bad world. He must face the world; he must overcome its evil; where he found evil, he must leave good behind; in short, man must be a hero, not a coward, in this pessimist world. But this is not true pessimism. Translated into action, the highest law for the pessimist is to live and act as if man were the son of God.

We are driven along in our thought to the one opening left us. Religion offers to bind these tremendous contrasts together in the harmony of good. This is especially the modern mission of religion. For religion bids us face all the facts bravely. It does not ignore the mighty contrast; but it bids us also go over to the side of good, and contemplate the universe from that side alone; it pronounces the whole universe divine, and bids us trust it accordingly. What we call evil and what we call good, the warp of life and its woof, all together go to make the harmony of life.

There are plenty of suggestions and parables to illustrate and enforce this teaching. Nature is one continuous parable of contrasts bound into

harmony. The earlier men did not know this; science has assured us of it. Science has brought us an outward universe. The lower creatures and the higher alike, the storm-cloud and the glorious sunset, the earthquake and the fertile fields, all make up the universe.

Human art catches the same interpretation. The most satisfying picture is made of contrasts in color and thought. The painter delights in catching on his canvas the wildest and grandest scenery, — the ocean in a storm, the great mountains rising over the peaceful valley. The artist loves to contrast the ideal beauty over against the monotonous labor of the world. True art is that which binds the contrasts in harmony; true art out of the contrasts brings joy, hope, the sense of victory.

The great works of literature, the bibles of the race, have the same unifying power. The satisfying stories grow out of contrast. Never does the course of true love run smooth; all the more holy and victorious true love becomes. Take the contrast of life out of the great dramas, and they would fall into insignificance; their dramatic unity is built out of the law of contrast. Thus that which is best in art, as though prophetic of the deeper facts of the universe, builds out of the mingled joy and pain the lasting harmony of good.

This brings us to certain deep facts of human experience. There are facts about pain, suffering, bereavement, which we do not guess; we know. What has built up the mystery of personality in ourselves? What has constituted all that we hold most sacred in our lives? It is a certain law of unity building up our personality out of all sorts of mingled materials. I spoke of the way in which the discomforts of a voyage drop out of the memory. I speak now of something more significant. As we look back on our lives, there are many things which at the time seemed hard and cruel, which now we do not see how we could have spared from our experience. They went into the unity, into the structure of the personality. Seen first in the guise of pain, they appear now transformed into sympathy, into faith. Looked at, indeed, from the side of good, and of trust in the unfailing good, these things which we once called bad now look good.

There was a boy, sensitive and apprehensive, brought up under the shadow of the older theology. To this boy the worst possible thing seemed to have happened. He had sinned against grace and lost his soul. After months of mournful conflict he somehow felt his way to the side of good. He began to consider his own broken life from that side. There was yet duty for him to perform. Though his soul seemed to be lost he

would still live as a son of God ought to live. Though doomed to hell he would face the way of heaven. Behold! the boy had caught the secret of the eternal life. He had experienced religion without knowing it. For a thought had come to bind over the tremendous contrasts of his life into harmony and growing personality. Slowly peace came back, and at last gladness again, as of one who had seen the spectacle of evil overcome by good.

This has been in many forms a frequent experience. Men have faced the worst seeming evils, losses, disease, and death. From the side of evil these things could not be borne. They embitter men's lives. But men have faced all these things from the side of good. They have trusted the overruling unity, they have vowed to keep their faces towards the front wherever light might come. Men have never tried this secret and found it to fail. Harmony, unity of view, beauty, personality, have repeatedly grown out of these very contrasts which at first bewildered the mind.

I might illustrate how the life of the family and the home grows out of similar contrasts. In what home do its members love each other most? In the home surely where the family life has been checkered, where husband and wife have borne the changing vicissitudes, where old and young have toiled together to purchase the house, or

to earn an education. So surely as the various changes of life have been met from the point of view of trust in the good God, unity, joy, and peace have blessed that home. I might illustrate the same fact in the civic or the national life. It is the nation which passed through the birth throes of the revolution; it is the nation which paid the dire cost to free its slaves; it is the nation which has struggled to meet and solve the vast modern questions of political welfare, that is now slowly welded together into permanent unity. The national life grows strong out of contrasts, met and blended in a spirit of trust both toward God and toward men.

Let us see where we have come. We have found that there are two ways, and two only, of meeting the contrasts of life, which we cannot and would not shut out of sight. One way to meet them is from the point of view of the individual who suffers. It is the way of selfishness, of egotism, of evil. It exaggerates pain and makes the worst of it. Because love and joy have been, it emphasizes the present fact of loss. It broods over its injuries. It shuts itself up in its prison house. We have called this a way. But it is not a way. It leads nowhere except to bitterness or death. It bears a load for others also needlessly to suffer.

The other and only way is the way of religion.

It takes its joys when they come and thanks God. It takes its sorrows also in sublime trust that all will be well. It will never forget real joy and love. Where love has been heroism must ever be. Thus the way of religion leads the sufferer out of his isolation. It binds him together with all other human hearts. It binds him over to the life of God. It teaches him to take pain and transmute it into good. Where sorrow was, he learns to put the more sympathy, the more courage, the wider faith.

There becomes a great brotherhood of those who go the way of religion. They go shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand. One strengthens another. They will not let one another fall. "See," men say, to whom sorrow has come, "see how these neighbors of ours bore their sorrow only yesterday. They bore it like the children of God. Their faces already carry God's smile. Come, what they have done we will do likewise. We will take their way and go with them." Thus religion binds men together in ever strengthening bonds of unity.

Here is where we need a new and more thorough education for our children. We need a religion of emotion. But we need good thought, clear philosophy, that our emotion may be the more rich and full and stable. We need to believe ourselves, and to teach our children what

we sometimes say too glibly, that this is God's world and that we are his children. We need to teach them that this is the only conceivable method of sound thought, that this thought alone has any promise of making sense and unity out of the facts of the world and of life. We need more; we need to trust our beautiful thought at the touch of any trouble. We will venture ourselves as that thought bids us march. We will not be surprised, we will not let our children be surprised, if the night follows the day and the rain comes after the sunshine. But we will live as children of the day. We will bear the rain and the storm as those who are sure of the rainbow and the sunshine again.

All manner of divine voices bring us their message toward this grand solution of the contrasts of life. The voices of the noble past sound to us through centuries. "Listen," they say. "Who has ever trusted in God and found him to fail? Who of us has ever looked toward the light that it has not shone again?" The voices of good friends gone before us to their long home bear the same word. When trouble comes, they seem to speak very tenderly to us. "Listen," they say; "we too bore troubles and sorrows; we grew thereby more patient, noble, heroic; out of our troubles we loved God and we loved men the better. Stand with us now; take all that life

brings, turn your evil into lasting good." The voices of the present, of living men and women, of multitudes about us, call upon us. When we rejoice, they bid us share and spread our joy; when we lose and suffer, they entreat us all the more to pay the cost of larger love and deeper trust. The unknown faces of the future generations speak to us. What the great and good have won for us at cost of tears and blood, — their truth, their constancy, their faith in the living God, and their hope, — all the future generations beseech us to hand on to them unimpaired, enriched by the fruitage of our lives. All that is in us worthy and honest, — our reason, our conscience, our human love, the mysterious sense of the divine presence, — all the deepest experiences of our lives, harmonize together as we give ourselves to the sway of these voices, which are indeed the voice of God. As one of the poets sings to us, who knew well of what she wrote: —

"God, thou art love; I build my faith on that.
Thou hast led my path, and made light for me in the darkness,
Tempering sorrow so that it reached me like a solemn joy.
It were too strange that I should doubt thy love."

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